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THE FEATURE NEWS MAGAZINE

JUL 7 1975

NewTimes

The end of empire: a portrait of Vietnam's last Ugly American

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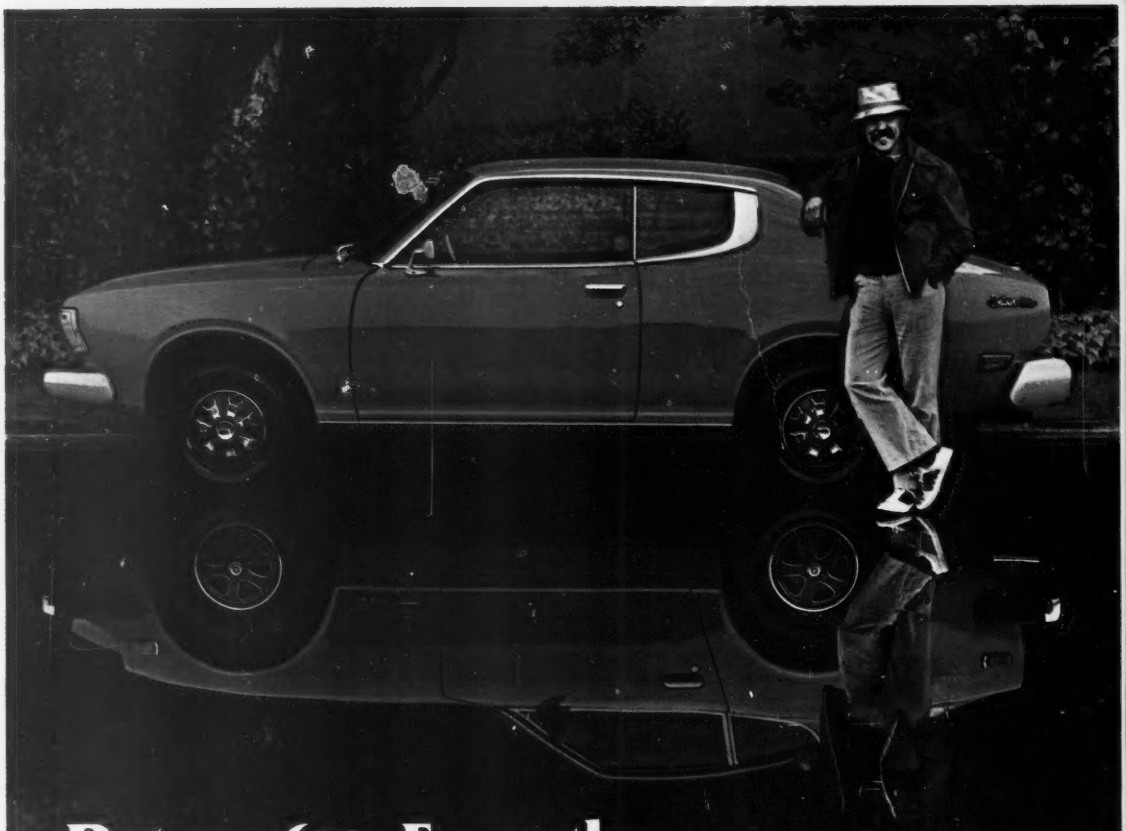

Datsun 610. From the same engineers who brought you the Z.

You've watched the Datsun Z-Car legend grow over the past five years. But you may be surprised at what we have to tell you about another Datsun, the 610. It's designed by the same engineers that brought you the Z. Its overall engineering profile is remarkably similar to the Z, which makes it a great road car.

The 610's 2-liter engine has an overhead camshaft, same as the Z-Car. It's more expensive to make than a standard push-rod engine, but smoother running thanks to 43% fewer parts. The camshaft rides in four, not three, bearings, which makes the valve geometry more accurate and keeps things in harmony. The crankshaft rides in five main bearings. The aluminum head dissipates heat better than cheaper (but more common) cast iron. And it has a double roller chain, oil-bathed enclosed camshaft drive instead of the more common rubber belt. In all, a sum total of engineering advances that produces overall driving excellence. Turn on a Datsun 610, and you'll know exactly what we mean.

Datsun Saves

Datsun 610 specs: Engine: 4-cyl. SOHC water cooled. Bore and stroke: 3.35 in. x 3.39 in. Compression ratio: 8.5:1. Wheelbase: 98.4 in. Curb weight: 2,552 lbs. (Hardtop). Transmission: All-synchro 4-speed, floor shifter (or optional 3-speed automatic). Suspension: Independent front and rear (except Wagon). Tires: 165SR-13 radials.

CAT STEVENS GREATEST HITS

PEACE TRAIN/MOONSHADOW/WILD WORLD
FATHER & SON/MORNING HAS BROKEN
ANOTHER SATURDAY NIGHT/SITTING
HARD HEADED WOMAN/CAN'T KEEP IT IN
OH VERY YOUNG/READY
and his latest single, previously unreleased,
TWO FINE PEOPLE

ON A&M RECORDS

Produced by Cat Stevens and Paul Samwell-Smith

(Hard-
adials.

NEW TIMES, JULY 11, 1975, Volume 5, Number 1

TOP OF THE NEWS

The last of the American Caesars Graham Martin was the perfect choice to preside over the collapse of South Vietnam: imperial, arrogant and deluded. All he lacked was a fiddle **By Robert Sam Anson** page 16

THESE ARE NEW TIMES

Games animals play Equipped with a device called "Hi Fido," top dog psychologist Dare Miller makes $50-an-hour house calls to attend to his maladjusted canine clientele **By Paul Boorstin** page 36

LOCAL COLOR

Side Trips The memorial casualties **By Robert Ward** page 34

Free-fire zone A symbol of urban decay and neglect, New York's South Bronx is so far gone that its inhabitants are putting the match to it—4,100 fires so far this year. It's the apocalypse by implosion **By David Black** page 40

THE ARTS

Love, literature and Lyndon In the stormiest publishing fracas of the year, Harvard professor Doris Kearns and ex-presidential speechwriter Richard Goodwin are pitted against an obscure New York editor. The prize: the ultimate insider book on LBJ. The possible cost: three damaged reputations **By Gerry Nadel** page 52

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When it comes to disco music, it's not hard to figure who's number one. Motown. So it's not surprising for Motown to be the one to create an exciting new series of discs with one objective in mind: to get you on your feet and dancing.

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The Disc-O-Tech concept takes twelve all-time disco greats and puts them together on one album that's programmed specifically for non-stop dancing. No more skipping from disc to disc. No more shuffling through a stack of singles. No more programming your own tapes or cassettes.

MOTOWN BRINGS YOU DISCO THREE WAYS ON THREE DIFFERENT ALBUMS.

Motown Disc-O-Tech series premieres with three different disco programs on three different albums. *Disc-O-Tech #1* features some of the biggest disco attractions of the past. A dozen gold singles. The original million-plus sellers. Among them, Stevie Wonder's classic *Uptight (Everything's Alright)*, Martha Reeves & The Vandellas' *Dancing In The Streets*, Junior Walker's *Roadrunner*, Marvin Gaye's all-time smash, *I Heard It Through The Grapevine*, Smokey Robinson & The Miracles' *Going To A Go-Go*. And More. *Disc-O-Tech #2* is filled with recent disco hits, including The Commodores' *I Feel Sanctified*, The Temptations' *Law Of The Land*, Eddie Kendricks' *Date With The Rain*, and others, featuring Gladys Knight & The Pips, The Supremes, The Miracles, G. C. Cameron, Willie Hutch, and Rare Earth.

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Disc-O-Tech #3 is an *entirely* new, never-before-released collection of non-stop *instrumental* disco music, featuring the sounds of Motown's *Magic Disco Machine*, an assemblage of musicians whose talents and energies have provided the driving force behind most of Motown's biggest hits.

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Disc-O-Tech now makes it possible to take the fun of disco dancing anywhere there's a turntable. Now everyone can literally be "Dancing In The Streets" at the drop of a tone arm. Disco-O-Tech s 1, 2, and 3 are available now. Watch for more Disc-O-Tech volumes, coming soon. From Motown. Where it all starts happening.

Letters

Life in the camps

My compliments and praise on Robert Anson's article "The prisons of our freedom," June 13. From the cover picture to the title to the "ever-present State Department briefer," you have captured the life and spirit of these camps. I am a second lieutenant currently stationed at Fort Chaffee, Arkansas. I've been here a week longer than the "new arrivals." When I first saw your article, I must confess that I was afraid it would be one-sided and not portray an accurate picture of the camps. After reading, all you need to do is change the pictures, and Fort Pendleton to read Fort Chaffee, and you would have this place down pat. With a little reflection, I also realized I've been a little too close to the forest to see all the trees. Again, my regards for an excellent job of handling "the prisons of our freedom."

Garth Bloxham
2LT, U.S. Army
Fort Chaffee, Arkansas

Hero or villain

Can't you see a person with as outrageous a personality as Abbie Hoffman in Red China, Russia or, better yet, the rice fields of Cambodia? His madcap antics wouldn't be tolerated . . . he'd be bored to death.

Fortunately for Abbie, there's plenty of relaxation, contentment and just plain fun to be had as a lip-service communist in the imperialist U.S.A.

George K. Kmetz
Cleveland, Ohio

Thank you for Abbie Hoffman, ("A rendezvous with Abbie Hoffman," May 30 and June 13). My friend and I were discussing the disappearance of the New Left some time ago. We agreed that it was not dead and had only gone underground. Thanks for making my dreams come true. Abbie is a true people's hero.

Russell Eichar
USS Saratoga

Rosenberg "propaganda"

Daniel Yergin's article on the Rosenberg spy trial ("Victims of a desperate age," May 16) is disappointingly lacking in fact and candor. It therefore emerges as just another propagandistic litany on the case, rather than the objective evaluation of the presentation of the facts that I had hoped for when I cooperated with Mr. Yergin in his research.

Perhaps the basic failing of Yergin's article has its genesis in his assumption about the present historical period. He comments that "the cold war has eased, the anti-communist consensus has collapsed." I guess that the good Professor was too busy writing his article to read about Cambodia, South Vietnam, Laos or the Mayagüez.

Roy M. Cohn
New York City

Management philosophy

Once in a while I get to read something which catches a key nail square on its head. Richard Cornuelle's "The Executive Epidemic" (June 13) is one such. It could very well be a small masterpiece of management philosophy.

Nick Buckeridge
Andover, Massachusetts

Reading Richard Cornuelle's "The Executive Epidemic" was fun, up to a point. Lots of brash hokum, cute quotes and weird projections. Then he hits us with this: "The number of people who escape management by working on their own has declined drastically. Twenty years ago there were 5 million self-employed people in America. Today there are only a million."

This number struck me as strange. Hell, I must know *half* a million artists and writers myself. Sure enough, the current *Statistical Abstract of the United States* gives the latest (1973) number of self-employed as 7,202,000. Twenty years ago (1955) the total was 9,617,000.

James Real
Pasadena, California

Richard Cornuelle replies:
The raw census definition of employment and hence of self-employment is useless. It would include, for example, someone who shoveled snow for an hour a week, or washed some windows between wage-paying jobs, or did a little gardening after work. I used what seemed to me the most sensible subcategory—non-farm proprietors over 16 years old—to illustrate the very general point I was making.

To make the disputed sentences wholly accurate, I would have to amend them to read: "In 1950, there were 4,910,000 nonagricultural proprietors over 16 years old in the United States. In 1970, there were only 903,877." But I'm not going to do it.

Richard Cornuelle's opinion about placing the emphasis on results rather than subordination is laudable and humane. The success stories of the Gaines plant in Topeka, the Scottsdale fire department and Hospital Affiliates are notable, and he could have easily added Volvo in Sweden and Olivetti in Italy to the list. However, Mr. Cornuelle must be cautioned about the counter-productive application of performance contracting where it doesn't belong. Performance contracting is not, as Cornuelle puts it, "emerging" in public education. It has been experimented with extensively over a substantial period of time and, although Cornuelle neglects to report the fact, everywhere it has been tried, it has failed. Mr. Cornuelle says that "specifying behavior is dehumanizing" and "specifying results is emancipating." However, the results being specified in educational performance contracting are specific behaviors conditioned into students.

Andrew Frew
Detroit, Michigan

Massage (?) parlors

Slow Down

By James S. Kunen

A companion and I were walking down a straight and narrow office tower canyon on Manhattan's East Side, far from the neon range of the Midnight Cowboys. Nestled among the banks, directly opposite the headquarters of the Girl Scouts of the U.S.A., a small sign over a doorway caught our attention: "Body Rubs," it said. A fellow had leaflets in our hands before we knew it. Beneath a photo of two naked women in a bubble bath with a man who looked as pleased as the tropical punch in his free hand, we read: "Thrill to the sensually relaxing body rub that brings on the fantastic climax of your Experience. . . . All major credit cards accepted."

"How can they get away with that?" my companion demanded of me. "It's an open invitation to prostitution!" I agreed it seemed that way, but who can trust advertising today?

So one night I returned to investigate. A man who looked a little like Billy Graham welcomed me into a front office, bade me sit down and triggered a slide show of smiling beauties on a built-in screen behind him. "These are some of our girls. A regular half-hour session is $40 we're charging $30 the girls work strictly on tips," he said, not so much as raising an eyebrow one suggestive millimeter. He added that there was a topless dancer for my entertainment "before and after," and the drinks were on the house. Though he seemed like the sort of man who'd sell his own mother an Arizona ranchette, I handed him three tens.

He ushered me into a round room with a thatched ceiling—a perfect imitation of a Holiday Inn bar's imitation of a Polynesian setting—and suggested I relax and have a drink. "When you feel ready, one of our girls will see to you."

A not terribly attractive but very cordial young woman clad in a rather frumpy two-piece bathing suit poured me a plastic cup of Scotch while I watched "Tiny, our topless dancer" fidget slightly to disco records. She chatted with a couple of the "Harem Girls" just as though my two middle-aged jacketed-and-tied fellow customers and I weren't there. Tiny said she was excited about renewing her study of ballet after a six-year hiatus. One of the "Harem Girls" said that Susan Ford had broken up with her boyfriend because they disagreed over the Equal Rights Amendment.

When I was as relaxed as I was going to get, I strode up to a chubby young woman with an orange plastic orchid in her blonde hair and asked if she were available. She said "yes"—she could have been a Dunkin' Donuts waitress saying yes there are honey-dipped—and led me to a shower room. When I stepped out of the shower, Mary—that was her

name—read a last sentence or two in a paperback before leading me to my "pleasure chamber," her salt mine.

"What's that you're reading?" I asked. She held up the book for me to see: *The Massage Parlor*. "One of the girls brought it in so we could see what *really* goes on in these places," she said with a smile which could only be described as ironic.

As she massaged my back, Mary told me that her desire was to write screenplays, but she'd found it impossible to work a regular job *and* write, so instead she'd just work for a time, accumulate some money and then just write for a time. She was debating taking some courses at night, but was skeptical about the value of formal instruction. She had dropped out of Pembroke, Brown's sister school, twice.

"How'd you happen to get into this work?" I couldn't help asking.

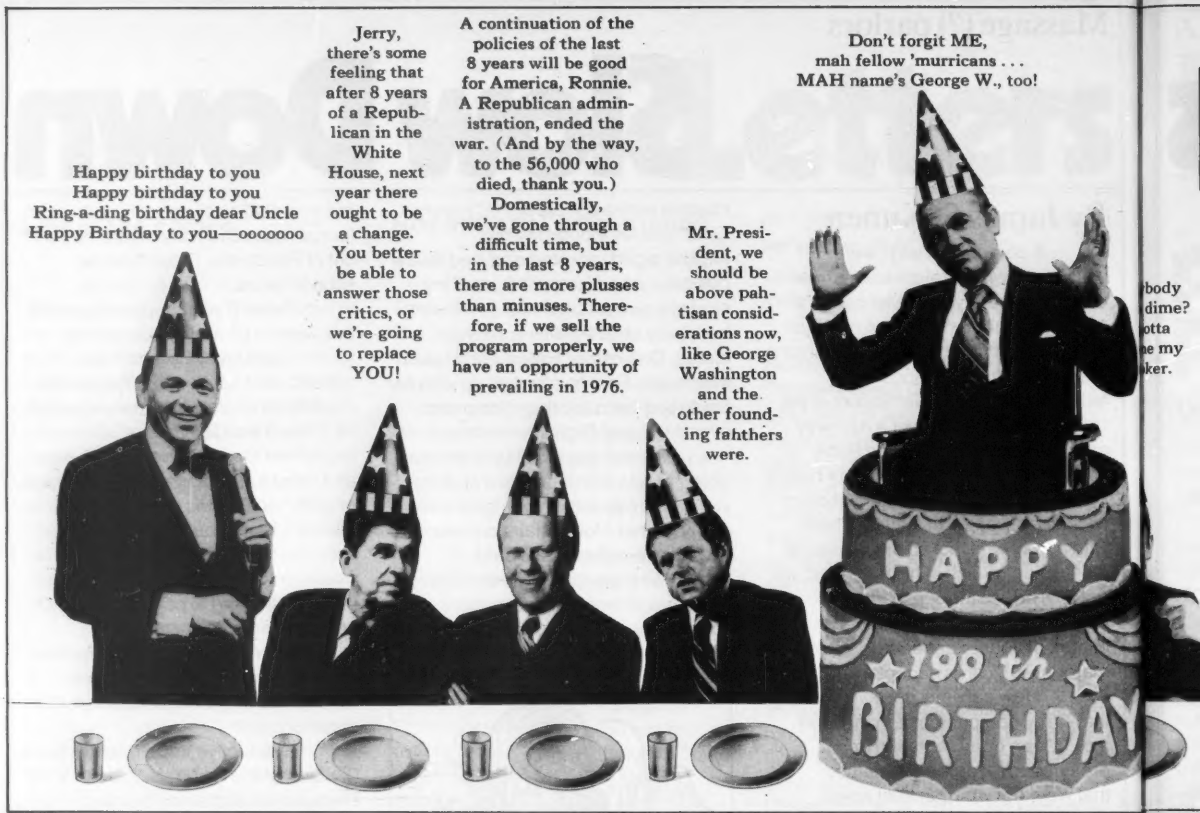
"Just lucky I guess," she replied, and continued: "You can tip me $25 for a total nude massage, $45 for French and $65 for sex." She explained that the girls get no salary and must turn in a healthy percentage of their "tips" to the management. "Some places you can keep all your tips. But here they maintain a nice place, so customers come in. It's no good not having to pay anything in if you have no customers."

How is it possible for what turn out to be houses of prostitution to function openly without running afoul of the police?

A detective in the Public Morals Division of the New York Police Department explained that the massage parlors are "very smart." They will never contract with you to perform any illicit act until you have totally disrobed, because they know Police Department policy forbids a policeman to take all his clothes off in the line of duty. Were a scandalized customer to press charges, it would be his word against the girl's. Even if cops raided the place and found two people having sex, the detective said, "how could you prove that he paid for it? And how could you ask him to testify against himself? There's a 'john law' that makes it illegal for him to pay her. What are you going to say—'You are entitled to representation by an attorney. You have a right to remain silent. Anything you say may be used against you in court. Now, did you pay this woman to screw you?' "

A spokesman for the District Attorney echoed the cop's frustration, but added, "If people wouldn't go to them, the massage parlors wouldn't be there."

People do go to them; they're springing up all over. It seems when it comes to sexual behavior between consenting adults, the only law with any force is the law of supply and demand ●


Happy birthday to you
Happy birthday to you
Ring-a-ding birthday dear Uncle
Happy Birthday to you—oooooooo
Jerry, there's some feeling that after 8 years of a Republican in the White House, next year there ought to be a change. You better be able to answer those critics, or we're going to replace YOU!
A continuation of the policies of the last 8 years will be good for America, Ronnie. A Republican administration, ended the war. (And by the way, to the 56,000 who died, thank you.) Domestically, we've gone through a difficult time, but in the last 8 years, there are more plusses than minuses. Therefore, if we sell the program properly, we have an opportunity of prevailing in 1976.
Mr. President, we should be above pahtisan considerations now, like George Washington and the other founding fahthers were.
Don't forgit ME, mah fellow 'murricans . . . MAH name's George W., too!
HAPPY
199 th
BIRTHDAY

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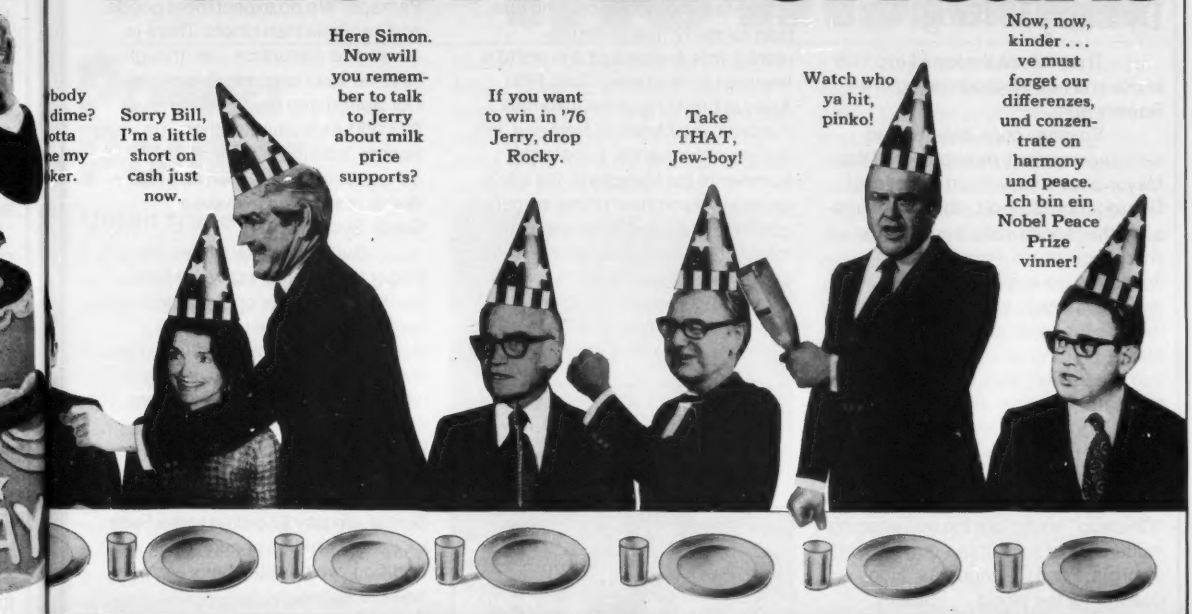
By Stuart Hample & Seymour Chwast

Fellow Americans


body dime? otta e my ker.
Sorry Bill, I'm a little short on cash just now.
Here Simon. Now will you remember to talk to Jerry about milk price supports?
If you want to win in '76 Jerry, drop Rocky.
Take THAT, Jew-boy!
Watch who ya hit, pinko!
Now, now, kinder . . . ve must forget our differenzes, und conzentrate on harmony und peace. Ich bin ein Nobel Peace Prize vinner!

Olé!

For a smooth Margarita mix 1½ ozs. Olé Tequila, 1½ ozs. Triple Sec and ½ oz. Lemon or Lime Juice. Shake well with ice and strain into salt-rimmed cocktail glass. Then enjoy the smooth-tasting Mexican spirit that makes people want to shout – Olé!

Also available in Gold.

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Troubles in Paradise

Fulminations

By Larry L. King

They tell me the town I live in is broke and has the credit rating of a Bowery bum.

So many cops, firemen and sanitation workers must be pared that Mayor Beame may resort to National Guard labor. Schools, libraries, parks and other social institutions may be sharply curtailed. Politicians, financiers, journalists and city employees daily establish new records for doom-saying and blame-placing. "Fun City" is turning into "Fear City," they proclaim, and Manhattan may be on its last legs.

I don't know whether to believe them. All my life, I've heard that New York is the world's richest city. Praise sung to it made Carl Sandburg's "Chicago" sound like the self-effacing mutterings of some three-dog town in Georgia. For if Chicago was "Hog Butcher for the World . . .Stormy, Husky, Brawling/City of the Big Shoulders," then New York City was Big Daddy Banker to the World/Svelt, Sophisticated, Haute Couture/City of the Big Dream. If your itch couldn't be scratched in Pocatello, you headed for New York.

Long ago, back in the scabby movie houses of flawed little Texas towns, I ran hot fevers watching Judy Garland come from Dullsville to wow 'em on Broadway, George Raft rise to become king of Big Apple mobsters, William Powell and Myrna Loy exchanging brittle witticisms over exotic foods in chic Gotham restaurants. My radio broadcast that Joe Louis reigned in Madison Square Garden, Joe DiMaggio patrolled Yankee Stadium and Ken Strong kicked field goals at the Polo Grounds. The celebrated writers Round Table was at the Algonquin, and the Algonquin was not to be found in Fort Worth. I first answered the painted lady's siren call as a 17-year-old kid; ever since, I've been vaguely dissatisfied when anywhere else.

If one is suddenly to believe in New York City's vulnerability, one must overcome more than a mere lifetime of propaganda. One must, for example, learn to distrust one's eyes. For the *appearance* of affluence is no less than formerly. The glittering restaurants are packed, the world's loveliest women leave Saks Fifth Avenue buckling under luxurious burdens, the Mets and Nets and Jets entertain thousands, people still summer in the Hamptons, the city's generally exorbitant prices somehow continue to be met. If we are on the road to the poorhouse, we are drinking bubbly all the way to the ragpile.

All this makes it more difficult to interest Washington or Albany in bailing us out. When you are Number

One, as New York City has so arrogantly prided itself on being, jealousies and resentments accrue; those lower in the rankings enjoy your great fall. What I have failed to mention—and what the politicians forget—is the "other" New York, the *majority* New York: the slums of Brooklyn's "Bed-Sty," the gutted South Bronx, the work-humped many in Queens.

Gerald Ford has refused to help the city, not wishing to assist Governor Carey's presidential ambitions, and has joined the chorus singing that the city's problems are of its own making. Perhaps. We *do* expect more goods and services than others. There is waste and corruption, yes, though we have far from a monopoly on these. Our policemen may rise to $23,000-plus salaries; there are more boards, commissioners and do-gooder projects than elsewhere. We've really tried to make a Great Society.

But if our welfare lines are longer than others, many are here because of inferior opportunities back home. Most of them want to work—despite popular belief to the contrary—but have been unable to catch the dream they chased here. The old cliche, "For every light on Broadway there's a broken heart," applies also to the unskilled or unlettered refugee poor. And listen, Buster, we pay $7 billion to the Feds for each $1 billion coming back. In addition, we pay steep city and state tributes.

Everyone has a solution, though none appears viable. Barry Goldwater has a notion the city should be cut adrift and floated to sea; Jerry Ford, Congress and Albany instruct us to make do with less. Norman Mailer proposes New York City as the 51st State. Now another writer, Pete Hamill of Brooklyn, would have us secede to become the Republic of New York. This, he says, would make for "the most humane" society in the world: withdrawing our billions from the Pentagon and other parasites would permit Paradise to regain itself. It sounds swell until Hamill explains that in this pluperfect society we would be drafted to work so many days each month for the new flag: killing rodents, refurbishing slum housing, planting flowers on rooftops. I don't know, Pete; it sounds a little much like China to me, and without the agrarian advantages. It wouldn't be *New York,* Pete, if you were not free to give the Bronx Cheer to the authorities.

Personally, I'm for giving Abe Beame a little more time to play on the sympathies of hard-hearted Feds, or to convince the Rockefellers not to cut off our loans. Meanwhile, pass the bubbly and give me another taste of that crazy caviar. ●

An end to legalized price-fixing;
The shame of the AMA convention

The Insider

EDITED BY TONY SCHWARTZ

Power Politics

Unfair trade off

It is a fair prediction that Congress will end the 38-year-old "fair trade" rip-off by Christmas shopping time.

Already this year New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and eight other states have ended what some consider legalized price-fixing. A number of large manufacturers also are announcing they will cease enforcing their inflated fair-trade prices. But the real cause of all this sudden pro-consumer activity is a simple two-sentence bill that is sliding through the Senate and the House with virtually no opposition and with President Ford's backing.

The bill would repeal an exemption to the antitrust laws enacted during the Depression, ostensibly to aid small shopkeepers. Without the exemption it would become illegal for manufacturers to require retailers to charge list price. "At a time of economic distress, says Edward Brooke (R-Mass.), the bill's sponsor, "this legislation alone will save the American consumer between $1.5 and $3 billion a year."

Twenty-six states still have fair-trade laws on the books. Interestingly, Congress has never imposed fair trade on the District of Columbia, where senators and House members do their own shopping.

Time for Sargents

Jill Volner, the Watergate prosecutor who grilled Rose Mary Woods on the infamous 18½-minute tape gap, has turned down a lucrative offer to join ABC as a legal correspondent. "I'd rather keep trying cases," she says, "and you can't do both." She will stay close to the political action, though, by joining the firm of Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver and Jacobson, whose best-known partner—Sargent Shriver—is itching to run for president. Although Volner will teach one day a week at Columbia, she will continue to live in Washington. "My office," she notes wryly, "is at the Watergate, and I suppose that's the final irony."

WIDE WORLD

Volner: turning down TV

You can go home again

More than 16,000 of the estimated 20,000 draft dodgers living in Canada have no outstanding charges in the U.S., but many of them nonetheless believe they are still wanted. With that in mind, Tim Maloney of the Winnipeg-based War Resisters Information Program (WRIP) recently began a six-month tour of Canada to spread the word to the American refugees that, in most cases, they are free to return home.

Maloney is armed with a complete list of men still wanted by the U.S. government, and his tour is funded in part by a $62,000 grant from the National Council of Churches. So far he has contacted more than 4,000 war resisters, either directly or through a Winnipeg telephone information service; of those reached, 60 percent learned that they may return home unmolested. If a man is still wanted, WRIP lawyers in the U.S. will check his records and file a motion to dismiss charges against him, while the resister stays in the sanctuary of Canada. WRIP claims a 50 percent success rate in the cases it has handled so far.

Resisters, however, are hard to reach, in some cases because they are afraid to attend public meetings. More important, a deep strain of bitterness among them endures. While many would like a clear record so that they might visit friends and family back in the States, few express any interest in returning to the U.S. to live. As one man told Mahoney: "The only way they're going to get me back is when I get a letter of apology from Jerry Ford—a personal letter."

What's left

They don't command as much attention as they once did, but last month a collection of '60s radical-activists met again, this time for a nuts and bolts Madison, Wisconsin, conference entitled "Alternative State and Local Public Policies." Many of the participants were in the vanguard of the '60s antiwar Left; today a significant number either hold or seek elective office. Among the best known were Tom Hayden, candidate for the senate in California; Sam Brown, Colorado state treasurer; Paul Soglin, mayor of Madison, and Justin Ravitz, a Marxist Detroit judge. A series of workshops were held on such nitty-gritty topics as "Job Development and Public

WIDE WORLD

Hayden: the left reconvenes

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Employment," "Alternative Transportation Policies" and "Public Ownership of Utilities"; Ravitz's "Humanizing Justice and Public Safety" may have been the best received. For anyone interested, transcripts of the workshop speeches are available through the Institute for Policy Studies, 1909 Q Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009.

Making Brown red

While the Wisconsin conference was taking place, one of its participants, Sam Brown, was having his troubles back home in Colorado. Brown, once the chairman of the Vietnam Moratorium Committee and an engineer of the massive October 1969 march on Washington, won election last fall as treasurer in Colorado. The '70s may be a time of lowered voices and increased pragmatism, but that didn't stop Brown from using his new

WIDE WORLD

Brown: typing his own letters

forum to make waves. Almost immediately, the 31-year-old politician had his conservative foes cringing by suggesting, among other things, that the state take over private utilities.

In apparent retaliation, the Republican-dominated state senate set out to crimp Brown's style. The idea of occupying the young treasurer's time with tasks such as opening mail, typing letters and answering telephones was apparently an attractive one. Although Democrats balked at first, the Republicans have now achieved their goal. The 1976 state budget, as outlined in late June, includes funds for secretarial assistance for every major state officeholder—with the exception of Sam Brown.

Dam the fish

A three-inch-long fish may be about to stop construction of a controversial multimillion-dollar dam, to the delight of environmentalists and to the chagrin of the Tennessee Valley Authority.

From the beginning of the Tellico Dam project, environmentalists have dogged the TVA, because the Little Tennessee River—which the dam would block—is one of the best and most scenic canoeing rivers left in America. But despite threats, pleas and lawsuits, the TVA was able to begin preliminary construction several years ago.

Enter the snail darter, a tiny fish that lives only in rapidly moving water. The dam would turn the Little Tennessee into a lake and doom the species. When the snail darter's plight came to the attention of the Interior Department recently, officials decided that the fish will be added to the department's list of "endangered species" unless evidence is found by August proving that it can survive the dam. That might force an end to construction, since federal law forbids government agencies from participating in projects that jeopardize an endangered species.

TVA officials, frantically searching for a way out of the bind,

ILLUSTRATION BY DENIS GRLOFF

recently decided to introduce the fish into a nearby river. But zoologist David Etnier says "the chances of the fish surviving there are microscopic."

To TVA spokesman Lewis Gwinn, "the fish is just a minor species and the benefits of the dam outweigh letting one small fish live." To the environmentalists, nature must be preserved—and that includes the life of the darter. They don't deny, however, the fact that a rare species turning up on their side has been welcome. The conflict seems sure to end up in the courts.

The Word

Draining Elaine's, or The War of the Saloons

For a dozen years a single dimly-lit saloon on Manhattan's Upper East Side—Elaine's—has reigned unchallenged as the playground for New York's literati, show folk, visiting royalty, select politicians, the idle rich and assorted famous. On a given night one might encounter William Styron, Lauren Bacall, Dick Tuck, Barbara Howar, George Plimpton, James Arness, David Halberstam, Linda Lovelace, Woody Allen, Marion Javitz, John Lennon and Yoko Ono, Jules Feiffer, Bobby Short, Gay Talese, John Lindsay, Jack Richardson, Julie Newmar, Dan Jenkins, Fran Tarkington, Nora Ephron and even Jackie Kennedy Onassis. Elaine's has been the place to be seen, a clubhouse of sorts. Regulars sit at several "family" tables, reserved for them no matter how long the waiting line.

Now Elaine has competition. A place called Nicola's has been opened by Elaine's former headwaiter and silent partner. Feelings are running high: Elaine says she's suing Nicola, and Nicola says he's suing Elaine. He charges her with having hidden profits she's failed to share; she charges him with having accepted kickbacks from liquor and food salesmen. She's also angry that Nicola draws his favorite customers—and a couple of her top waiters—from those who formerly paid homage to Elaine's. Nicola's decor—autographed book jackets and photos of famous regulars adorning the walls—apes Elaine's.

Though generally careful of her regulars, Elaine has her detractors. Norman Mailer hasn't been in since a dispute two years ago. Some women—the wives or girlfriends of celebrities—complain of cold treatment at the hands of the hostess. But if Nicola has a softer personal touch than Elaine (she's been known to physically eject stray drunks, random hookers and tourists of no particular value), then Elaine remains able to seat three times the number of customers. Nicola has a solution: he intends to expand by next summer.

All this may sound like small potatoes in Cincinnati, but in certain Manhattan circles "The War of the Saloons" is Topic A these days.

Mind & Body

Is there a doctor in the House?

The purpose of the American Medical Association, according to its charter, is to "promote the science and art of medicine and the betterment of public health." But actions taken by the AMA's policy-setting House of Delegates recently seem to belie that

Doctor, can you give us a hand?

lofty goal. The House—a group of 251 MDs that includes no women, just one black and only two members under 40—considers itself the Congress of American medicine. At the AMA's recent annual convention in Atlantic City, the House's little-reported actions included the following:

—Declaring that only the Joint Committee on Accreditation of Hospitals (JCAH)—an organ of organized medicine—should scrutinize hospitals. (Earlier this year HEW spot-checked 105 JCAH-approved hospitals and found 69 of them substandard.)

—Rejecting a resolution that would have committed the AMA to fighting job discrimination against homosexuals.

—Boosting dues of AMA members from $110 to $250, partly to finance costly suits challenging government regulations designed to protect the public from rapacious medical practitioners. One suit, already filed, would enjoin HEW from curbing needless, protracted hospitalizations of Medicare and Medicaid patients.

—Applauding the efforts of the AMA board of trustees to amend state laws to make it harder for a patient to sue a doctor for malpractice.

—Opposing pending legislation to limit the number of training positions in glutted specialties such as general surgery and to compel medical school graduates to serve two-year stints in doctor-strapped rural or ghetto areas.

—Urging repeal of state laws (such as California's) that strictly control electroconvulsive "shock" therapy.

Also instructive was what the House of Delegates did not do. It took no position on such important health issues as the depletion of the ozone layer, the rise in cigarette smoking, the relaxation of antipollution standards or the proliferation of work-related health and safety hazards. Most conspicuously, the House took no action on one of American medicine's most notorious failings—the near-total absence of disciplinary control over incompetent practitioners.

Seventies

Education pays

Recent months have brought scattered reports of an abuse of the GI Bill inspired by current hard times. The law grants a considerable stipend to any veteran with 180 days of military service since 1955 who enrolls in school—and there's nothing in the law to keep a veteran from simultaneously holding a full-time job. A single person who signs up for a half-time load (six credits) receives $130 a month; a full-time married student with two children can get as much as $388 a month. By signing up at a community college, where course fees are low, the vet can use the remaining money as a hedge against tough times. In many cases, the "student" doesn't bother to show up for classes.

In Bozeman, Montana, our correspondent recently came across a particularly enterprising veteran, the president of a small technical manufacturing plant who is enrolled for a full load at Montana State while he awaits a Small Business Administration loan. The GI Bill keeps his bills paid and his business afloat—and without doubt amounts to respectable welfare.

The comic Canadian

First there was *Superman*, then *Batman* and now it's *Captain Canuck*, the all-Canadian superhero!

If the creation of a superhero is part of a nation's move toward maturity, then Canada's time has come. This week the first *Captain Canuck* comic books should hit newsstands across Canada and in some U.S. cities.

The first Canuck story—set in the 1980s— portrays Canada as the most powerful nation in the world, the United States as clearly second-rate. Even in the 1980s, though, the chief threat to world peace remains the nasty communists and their bid for world domination. Luckily, Captain Canuck (CC for short) and his Canadian International Security Organization (CISO) are prepared to fight the threat.

A comic look at Canada

Dressed in a red and white superoutfit speckled with maple leaves, Captain Canuck is the epitome of North American "Good," all for Free Enterprise and the Canadian Way. The chief bad guy in the first issue looks remarkably like Lenin, and his minions have a distinct Asian tinge.

The creator of *Captain Canuck*, Richard Comely, claims his magazine is 100 percent Canadian. Nonetheless, most of the advertising in the first issue is American and distribution is controlled by a U.S. company.

Special Report

Was Fidel on the grassy knoll?

By George O'Toole and Ron Rosenbaum

What do Lyndon Johnson, E. Howard Hunt and Jack Anderson have in common? They've all speculated in public that Fidel Castro may be connected in some way with the assassination of President Kennedy. Recent disclosures that the CIA may have been operating what LBJ called "a damned Murder, Inc." in the Caribbean have revived speculation that Castro ordered JFK's death to retaliate for repeated attempts on his life.

From a previously unpublished Secret Service report, *New Times* has learned that this theory was first offered to government investigators less than three weeks after the assassination. The report, discovered in the National Archives among Warren Commission documents marked CD 320, states that:

". . . on December 12, 1963 . . . Alonzo Heidt Hudkins III, a reporter for the Houston Post, advised the writer confidentially that he had received information from Felton West, the Houston Post Washington Bureau representative, to the effect that citizens of the United States had entered into an agreement or a plot to assassinate Premier Castro of Cuba and that Lee Harvey Oswald, who went to Mexico City on September 26 and allegedly returned about October 1-3, learned of this plot, which infuriated him.

"Mr. Hudkins inferred that this was a possible reason for Oswald assassinating the President.

". . . [Hudkins] states that Felton West, Post Washington Bureau, has more specific information as to the plot to assassinate Castro and the fact that President Kennedy and Vice President Johnson were informed of same by a former Cuban premier."

On March 10 of this year Jack Anderson wrote that "sources familiar with the CIA (anti-Castro) conspiracy can't shake a nagging suspicion—unsupported by the Warren Commission's findings—that Castro may have become aware of the U.S. plot upon his life, and therefore may have recruited Oswald to retaliate against President Kennedy."

Now this Secret Service report suggests that even the Warren Commission may have had reason to consider that "nagging suspicion." But who is this Alonzo Heidt Hudkins III, and do we have reason to take at face value the story he gave to the Secret Service?

Hudkins' name is a familiar one to students of the intricacies of the Kennedy assassination and may well be still familiar to ex-Warren Commissioner Gerald Ford, who described the session at which Hudkins' name first became an issue as the "most tense and hushed" session of the Commission he had ever attended. The Hudkins affair, which Ford describes in detail in the opening chapter of *Portrait of the Assassin*, began on January 1, 1964, when a Hudkins story in the Houston *Post* entitled "Oswald Rumored as Informant for the U.S." disclosed that certain Dallas law enforcement officials suspected that Oswald may have been an informant for the FBI and cited the presence of a local FBI agent's name, address and license plate number in Oswald's address book and FBI interviews with Oswald on several occasions following his return from the Soviet Union.

This Hudkins story, along with a rumor that Oswald had an official FBI informant's "payroll number" (S-172 or S-179) and a $200 monthly salary from the Bureau, was passed on to the Warren Commission by Texas Attorney General Waggoner Carr. The Commission immediately summoned Carr and several Dallas law enforcement officials to Washington for an emergency briefing for Chief Justice Warren himself. At a subsequent meeting of the full Commission, the Commissioners spent hour upon hour agonizing over "this fellow Hudkins," how to figure out the source of his story and how to go about investigating it without tipping off J. Edgar Hoover. (They decided they couldn't and didn't, relying instead upon Hoover's blanket denial.)

Ten years after all this fuss, Hudkins revealed to a Philadelphia *Inquirer* reporter that he and two associates had simply "invented" the numbers S-172 and 179 and leaked their existence by discussing them over a telephone they believed tapped. In the 1973 *Inquirer* interview, Hudkins didn't deny that there might be substance to reports of an Oswald FBI link. Regardless of the S-172 hoax, Hudkins expressed belief that "Oswald was either a stoolie for the FBI or the CIA and turned out to be the greatest double agent of all time."

This year, Hudkins backed off further and wrote in the Baltimore *News-American*, "I have no personal knowledge that he was or wasn't a double agent. I have only my suspicions." But back in 1964 Hudkins seemed to have more than just suspicions. He claimed to have a source. According to a letter from J. Edgar Hoover to the Warren Commission, Hudkins told the FBI his source was "a Government official, not a Federal official in Dallas, who had told him that Oswald was on the payroll of either the FBI or the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) with voucher number 179 and that he had received no less than $150 a month and no more than $225 a month."

Hudkins' zigzag account of the reported Oswald-FBI link has left many observers in total confusion. *Newsweek* magazine, for example, leaped from Hudkins' confession that the number S-179 was his invention to the unwarranted conclusion that the whole question of Oswald's FBI connections was hoax material.

What then are we to make of the Hudkins story of a Castro-Oswald plot link in the Secret Service report?

New Times located Hudkins in Baltimore, where he's now a reporter for the Baltimore *News-American*.

It was no hoax, Hudkins said. "Yeah, I broke that all the way back then, but nobody would listen to me. The CIA knows about it."

Hudkins intimated that he had more than a little familiarity with what the CIA knew and didn't know, a familiarity that he said included personal involvement in Caribbean paramilitary activities, his accounts of which are strange and startling, to say the least.

Referring to recent disclosures of CIA assassination attempts, Hudkins said: "They've left one key person out of the list; that was Cheddi Jagan. I was on a team approached to knock off Castro and to knock off Cheddi Jagan."

Hudkins said he had been approached in late '62 or early '63 while working as an engineer for Hunt Oil in Houston and asked to join two other people on what he called a CIA "contract team."According to Hudkins, this "team" decided that a Castro attempt would be too risky, but was actively proceeding with a plot to get Jagan, the Marxist former prime minister of Guyana.

"We figured we couldn't knock off Castro without forfeiting our own lives. We said to hell with that—money doesn't do you any good if you're dead . . . . We wondered why in hell knock off somebody like Jagan. I still haven't figured out why except Kennedy hated his guts . . . . Johnson knew about it. He said with a wink, 'It's all right but it's unofficial.' But they called it off when it got close to the nutcracking."

In addition, Hudkins claimed his career as a sometime soldier of fortune included an attempt to smuggle "a thousand guns" to anti-Castro forces in Cuba around the time of the Bay of Pigs. He said that one of his close friends was killed during the CIA-directed hunt for Che Guevara in Bolivia and that he, Hudkins, was a source for "part of" Jack Anderson's sensational disclosures in 1971 that the CIA had employed Mafioso such as the late Sam Giancana to engineer some of its assassination attempts on Castro.

Questioned about the reference in the Secret Service report to a "former Cuban premier" who purportedly informed Kennedy and Johnson of the plot against Castro which Oswald purportedly ran into in Mexico City, Hudkins said, "He's not a premier or even an ambassador. He was a high-ranking minister in Castro's organization who barely got out with his life . . . . I can't tell you his name because he lives up here in Maryland now."

New Times contacted Felton West, onetime Houston *Post* Washington bureau reporter whom Hudkins had identified to the Secret Service as someone with "more specific information" about the Castro plot. West said, "I don't know where he got the idea. At that time the Secret Service called me and asked me about it. I couldn't explain it to them either." Hudkins told us that he didn't specifically remember telling that particular Secret Service agent the story, but that the agent may have misinterpreted what he'd said. Hudkins maintains he did have a source other than Felton West and stands by his story. He claims that still secret Warren Commisson documents in the National Archives will corroborate his story.

Right or wrong, Hudkins certainly deserves credit for being the first reporter to promote the speculation that U.S. assassination attempts against Castro somehow led to JFK's death in Dallas—a speculation that has become increasingly popular with certain political and governmental interests in recent days. One of the most fascinating examples of such speculation seems to have been prompted by a leak from the CIA itself.

In a copyrighted story on June 15 of this year, the Chicago *Tribune* said that according to "preliminary information furnished congressional leaders by a Central Intelligence Agency liaison man," the Warren Commission "may have been denied crucial information about the assassination of John F. Kennedy by two aides of the slain President who were advised by high officials of the Federal Bureau of Investigation to withhold certain data." The *Tribune* story indicates that, according to the CIA source, JFK aides Kenneth O'Donnell and David Powers, who were in the fatal Dallas motorcade, told investigators that they observed shots being fired from a location "other than the Texas School Book Depository from which Lee Harvey Oswald is accused of having gunned down the President."

According to the *Tribune*, the CIA liaison man alleged that the FBI told the JFK aides to keep quiet about what they saw because "testimony to that effect could lead to a possible international incident and inflame public passions fed by other secret information then known to the FBI."

The *Tribune* quotes O'Donnell as calling the story "an absolute outright lie," but goes on to speculate that this "secret information" known to the FBI may concern Oswald's involvement in Mexico City with Cuban and Russian embassy officials and the possibility that he was part of a communist-sponsored assassination conspiracy to retaliate for anti-Castro plots.

Stories such as this either ignore the considerable body of evidence which suggests that Oswald's so-called pro-Castro activities were attempts to infiltrate such groups on behalf of some government agency, or else theorize that Oswald may have been such an infiltrator, but only as a double agent for Castro.

Hudkins takes the latter route. "The nuts are on the right track," he says. "Oswald may have had help." But Hudkins believes the help came from agents of Havana or Moscow. (Hudkins even claims he knows the name of the pilot and the number of the plane that supposedly waited to help Oswald make his escape.)

One result of all this talk of possible Castro links to the assassination is that voices are being raised to question the continued relaxation of U.S. relations with Cuba, a process that seemed—a few short months ago—on its way to restoring full U.S. diplomatic recognition to the Castro government. Recently, President Ford reversed the trend when he announced that the U.S. would not necessarily abide by an Organization of American States action to drop the decade-old economic boycott of Cuba.

Alonzo Heidt Hudkins III is one of the people who takes credit for that reversal and attributes it to the Castro-Oswald links.

Asked by *New Times* why he hadn't written about his Castro plot information earlier, Hudkins said, "At that time they convinced me that maybe I shouldn't write all I know, but now in recent months, we've been the ones that slowed them down on resuming relations with Cuba. I mean, I and others raised the question: Should we go ahead and do this before we know whether this guy knocked off one of our presidents?" ●

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LYNDA J. WELLS

HOME: Cambridge, Massachusetts

AGE: 34

PROFESSION: Neurobiologist

HOBBIES: Yoga, classical guitar, hiking, cooking.

MOST MEMORABLE BOOK: Jung's "Memories, Dreams, Reflections"

LAST ACCOMPLISHMENT: Awarded a post-doctoral traineeship in experimental neurobiology.

QUOTE: "One of the most fascinating subjects for the scientist is the study of the human brain and human behavior. Neurobiological research will lead to an understanding of the basis of behaviors such as emotional illness."

PROFILE: Deep compassion gives her a strong commitment to help relieve the anguish of emotionally disturbed people.

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The last of the American Caesars

By Robert Sam Anson

It was when the last helicopter landed—with the knowledge that no more would follow—that the horror of what had been left behind finally overtook the Americans. On the deck of one of the carriers, the Marine colonel who had led the rescuers was weeping, openly and unashamedly. All that day, he had been telling crowds of terrified Vietnamese to remain calm, that there would be room for everyone, that the Americans would never forsake their friends. And now, events had made him a liar. Hundreds—a full 70 percent of the embassy's Vietnamese staff—had been left behind. The thought of them weighed heavily on the survivors. Some of the mission members were cursing, not caring who heard or what would be reported later. One embassy official wandered aimlessly about the ship, mumbling expletives over and over to himself. Others, tight-lipped and silent, stood off, lost in private grief. Then, suddenly, the man who had led them—their last proconsul—appeared at a hatchway. A blue Navy bathrobe was pulled round his shoulders, and he coughed from pneumonia; yet, somehow, the regal presence was still there, tattered but intact. To the reporters who approached, Graham Martin, United States Ambassador to the now-defunct Republic of Vietnam, had few words and no apologies. He looked up for a moment in the glare of the television lights, his eyes tired and sick, and then turned away. As he disappeared, someone noticed he was munching on an apple.

By all accounts, it was a classic Martin performance: cool, imperturbable, with the faint though unmistakable trace of the bizarre. The people who worked for him the last months of the war came to expect such things of the ambassador. And when, finally, the war was over, they would never forgive him for it.

Graham Martin was the perfect choice to preside over the collapse of South Vietnam: imperial, arrogant and deluded. All he lacked was a fiddle

If it were not for Martin, some of them said, they would still be in Saigon; indeed, there would still *be* a Saigon. If it were not for Martin, they would not have made promises to the Vietnamese that Martin had no intention of keeping. If it were not for Martin, the Vietnamese who had worked for them and had been their friends—and, to some of them, their lovers and families—would be with them now, instead of in the dark of Saigon, with their fate entrusted to new masters. Even now, in the quiet offices in Washington, the bitterness is slow in draining. "Martin," says one man who worked for him, "made Judases of all of us."

That was not how they felt in the beginning. It was not how anyone felt in the beginning, about Graham Martin or Vietnam. In the beginning, they both seemed bright, full of promise. By the end, their fates had become inextricably intertwined, the horror of one bound up in the horror of the other. Martin was not only a man; he was, in those days, a metaphor for all that had gone so wrong with American empire. Its fall was his fall.

That was the irony, right from the start. For when the word came to Saigon in the winter of 1973 that Graham Martin would soon be arriving to take command of the embassy over which Ellsworth Bunker had presided the last six years, there was, if not rejoicing, at least relief. The signing of the Paris accords in January 1973 had made the old Vietnam hands profoundly uneasy. Whatever assurances Henry Kissinger might provide, the agreement clearly gave away much more than it got. The nonexistent cease-fire, which devolved into general, if low-level, warfare, soon proved that. Compounding their anxiety was the steadily dwindling level of support which the Congress annually provided the South

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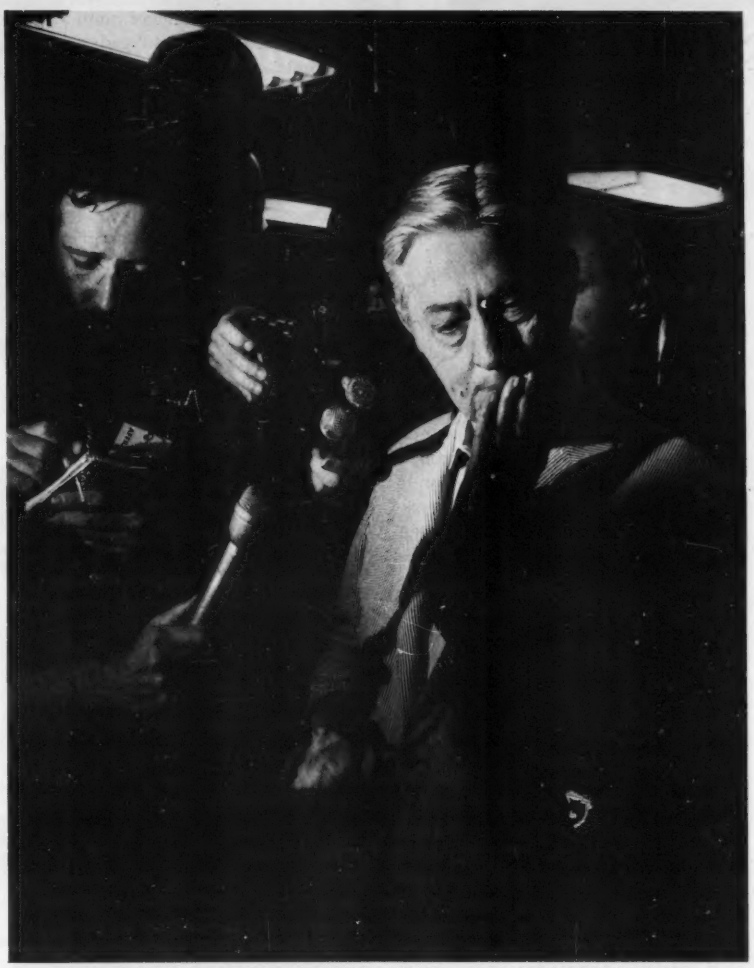
Vietnamese, not to mention the mushrooming domestic problems of the President, who, to both the Americans and Vietnamese alike, was far more to be trusted than the Henry Kissinger of the "decent interval." To many of them, Martin was just the sort of man the situation demanded: smart, tough, resourceful, a student of the ins and outs of dealing with Washington. Martin knew the area, having served a tour as ambassador to Thailand, and what was more, had a personal stake in Vietnam. His adopted son, Glenn, a helicopter pilot, had been killed during a mission in 1966. Graham Martin was not the sort of man who would preside over the dismemberment of American power in Asia.

Martin's initial performance confirmed such optimistic expectations. During his confirmation hearings before the Senate, he made it clear that he took quite literally the charge to every ambassador that he is the President's representative and is ultimately answerable to him and him alone. To underline the point, Martin delayed his departure for Saigon by six weeks, waiting for a personal appointment with the President. Kissinger reportedly bristled at Martin's insistence on a meeting with Nixon. Haldeman, then in the final act of his own personal drama, informed Martin that such an appointment was out of the question. But Martin persisted and, in the end, had his meeting with Nixon.

It quickly became apparent that the new ambassador had his own unique style. He was a loner, remote and aloof, seldom seen, even by some of the senior members of his staff. "He is like God," a secretary remarked one day. "I know he exists. I just don't see him." The comment no doubt would have pleased Martin. The ambassador had a well-developed sense of rank. "Martin considered himself one of the elect," a member of his staff said. "He was a man with a mission different from the rest of us. He was going to save Vietnam all by himself. He thought he was one of the Caesars."

Martin worked more like a Trojan: 16, 17, 18 hours a day, seven days a week, the routine broken only by dinner with his wife and an occasional movie, which he screened privately in the ambassadorial residence. His partisans explained that he was shy; the more common feeling in the embassy was that the old man, as the 62-year-old diplomat was called behind his back, was just plain cold. In either case, Martin did not seem to care what anyone thought of him, including, he liked to boast, the secretary of state. His satisfaction was in his work.



Martin munches an apple after the fall: few words and no apologies.

And it never stopped.

Where Bunker had read only the most important cable traffic flowing in and out of the embassy, Martin made it a point to read—and clear—all but the most routine messages. A chain-smoking insomniac, Martin would trudge back to the ambassadorial residence late every evening, his briefcase bulging with documents, cables and reports. He would be awake in his study until 2:00 or 3:00 every night poring through the paperwork, reading every report, evaluating every shred of raw intelligence, making corrections, jotting comments in the margin.

At first, the political officers, especially the younger ones, found Martin's personal attention heady stuff. "A lot of times when you write these reports, you think you are shouting down a well," says one man who served under Martin. "It's nice to know that someone is reading your stuff, especially when the someone is the ambassador." Inevitably, Martin's interest had another impact as well. As one Vietnam veteran puts it: "When the ambassador is going to be reading what you write, you tend to weigh every judgment with a little extra care. You even begin to watch the adjectives. It makes you very careful and, I guess, very cautious."

Martin's mastery of the paperwork gave him control of the embassy as well. Gradually, he whittled down the distribution channels for messages, cutting off low- and middle-level embassy officials from sources of information. With his senior aides, Martin ensured that each had only a portion of the information package. The whole picture was viewed by Graham Martin alone. The tactic provided him with an irrefutable argument whenever his judgment was questioned at the weekly mission council meetings. To his challenger, Martin would say in a low voice with an understanding smile, "Of course, you're mistaken. You can't be aware of all information that is available

only to me." If the challenger persisted, which became increasingly rare, Martin had a clincher. "Now," he would say, "you know my policy. I want the United States to withdraw from Vietnam as quickly and as honorably as possible. You don't disagree with that, do you?" And, of course, none did. There wasn't, nor could there be, any rejoinder to that proposition. "He was," one man remembers, "the perfect master of sophistry."

In time, dissenters arose. They didn't last long. Several embassy officials who didn't see eye to eye with Martin's policy, or his way of doing things, found themselves quickly transferred. It was a mark of the Martin touch that such coups were invariably bloodless. Often as not, dissenters found themselves being promoted as well as ousted, with an elaborate farewell party at the ambassador's residence a part of the bargain. In their place, Martin installed what came to be known within the embassy as "The Rome Crowd," a group of officials who took their name from prior service with Martin in Italy. What they lacked in Vietnam experience they made up, in Martin's view, with personal loyalty to the ambassador. There were a few notable exceptions. Wolfgang Lehmann, Martin's deputy, had served as the senior State man in the Delta. The worth of the experience, however, was questionable. In the words of one man who watched the embassy closely, "Martin kept Wolf away from anything that was important. His real job was keeping track of the toilet paper." Another holdover was Josiah Bennett, the chief of the political section, who came as close as anyone ever did to becoming a Martin confidant. There was never any question of Bennett's fealty, or his politics. A right-wing ideologue, Bennett had been a young foreign service officer in 1949 in Shanghai when China was, as he always put it, "lost."

The result was that a large, sophisticated embassy, which had once housed a whole spectrum of views and talents, increasingly became the creature of one man's will. The safeguards built in to prevent such an occurrence were chipped away one by one. "It was understood," recalls one member of Martin's staff, "that the weekly meetings with the ambassador were not the occasion for discussion of matters of substance. It was like we were the members of the family gathering once in a while to hear the reading of the will." One embassy official remembers asking a question at one such meeting that indicated doubts about the embassy's reporting. "The other guys at the table looked at me in horror," he says. "For a few moments, there was this awful silence, until Martin finally looked at me and said, as sweet and condescendingly as he could, 'You're mistaken, you know. I'll talk to you later privately.' And, of course, he never did talk to me privately later about that or anything that really counted."

The State Department hands were the easiest to bring into line. They had their careers to think about, careers that could be badly damaged by a poor fitness report from an ambassador of Martin's seniority and stature. Only one official "dissent" was filed with the State Department during Martin's tenure by a political officer, who charged that the ambassador had "tampered" with his reporting. Bureaucratically courageous as such a dissent was, the officer did not file it until after he had left Saigon, thereby considerably weakening his credibility. The charge, predictably, was found to be without substance.

In the streets of Saigon, Bunker's Yankee coolness had won him the nickname "the refrigerator." Martin was given a new sobriquet, "the freezer"

Martin also did his best to bring the military and the CIA to heel. Once, an aide recounts, the ambassador and General Homer Smith, the senior defense attaché in Saigon, were in the midst of a very polite, very serious argument in an embassy corridor. "Smith," says the aide, "was about to go in and brief some important vistiors from Washington, and Martin was coaching him on what to say. Smith was very nice about the whole thing, but very firm. 'Mr. Ambassador,' he said, 'I can't possibly tell those people that. I just don't believe it's the truth.' " On another occasion, Tom Polgar, the CIA's station chief, tipped a friend before one of the mission council meetings that he had an interesting piece of information that wouldn't please the ambassador. "I can't elaborate on it. The ambassador would go through the ceiling," the aide quotes Polgar as confiding. "I'll just drop it in as a little hint at the end of my briefing and maybe someone will be smart enough to pick up on it." They weren't.

Martin probably could have gone on without question at all had it not been for his own public blundering. His mistake was taking on three institutions even more formidable than he: the New York *Times*, organized religion and the Kennedy family.

The incident with the *Times* grew out of a 3,500-word story filed by David Shipler in late February 1974. Shipler, one of the ablest members of the Saigon press corps, reported that the U.S. was violating the spirit, if not the letter, of the Paris agreement by providing a whole range of technical and military assistance and advice to the South Vietnamese. Most ambassadors would have let the story pass without comment, or at most provided a rebuttal in coldly factual terms. But Martin had already decided that the editorial board of the *Times* had "a deep emotional involvement in the success of North Viet Nam's attempts to take over South Viet Nam by force of arms." The Shipler story finally broke the ambassador's reserve. In an emotional 4,600-word cable to Washington—which was quickly leaked to the press—Martin asserted that Shipler, wittingly or not, was a "tool of Hanoi," and suggested that his reporting "might well be made available to the Columbia Graduate School of Journalism as a case study of propaganda under the guise of 'investigative reporting.' "

Martin was still boiling when George Webber, an antiwar theologian and president of the New York Theological Seminary, showed up in Saigon for a visit a few weeks later. Martin invited Webber to the embassy and urged him to appeal to the communist delegation in Saigon to stop the terrorist attacks against South Vietnamese villages. Webber left Saigon without carrying out Martin's instructions. When he returned home, a package from Graham Martin was awaiting him. In it were a set of grisly photos of young Vietnamese killed in an NLF attack. "For the rest of your life," Martin wrote in an accompanying letter, "you will have to live with the unresolvable doubt that, but for your decision not to call, these children might still be alive."

Almost as Webber was visiting Saigon, a military aid request, seeking an increase in half a billion dollars in assistance for South Vietnam, was going before Congress. Liberals in the Senate were balking at the new funds, and one of them—Ted Kennedy, as it happened—asked the State Department if the increase in aid also amounted to a new commitment to the Thieu regime. In response, Martin informed State that it would be "the height of folly" to give "an

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honest and detailed answer" to Kennedy. Within days, his remarks were on the front pages of the *Times* and the *Post*.

Martin's methods had become increasingly unpopular at State, especially with the junior officers, and the incidents in early '74, which jeopardized the aid request rather than helped it, increased the hostility. Even the senior officers were unsettled. Assistant Secretary of State Philip Habib, who had headed the U.S. delegation to the Paris talks, made little secret of his loathing for Martin. Finally, in early 1975, at the personal insistence of Deputy Secretary of State Robert Ingersoll, an official inspection team was dispatched to Saigon to investigate Martin's stewardship. A member of the embassy staff remembers the visit vividly. "Before they came out, a number of the younger fellows in the mission were getting quite angry. I thought when the inspection team came out that the fat would really be in the fire. As a matter of fact, I gave the inspectors names of the people in the embassy they should talk to. And they did talk to them. And, when they were up against it, you know what these guys said about Martin? Nothing."

It is doubtful, in any case, whether anything they could have said would have made any difference. For while Martin may have alienated the press, the Congress, the church, even the whole of the foreign policy establishment, he had carefully cultivated a constituency of one, and it was the one who counted. "Martin," explains a former friend, "is just the sort of guy Henry Kissinger likes. A loner. Someone who is tough, who cuts through all the crap. Who can get on top of a big bureaucracy and master it and not give a shit what anybody else thinks. Graham Martin is Henry Kissinger's man. Don't you kid yourself. He did exactly what Henry Kissinger wanted him to do."

The ability to identify the power center and maneuver into its protective orbit did not win Martin many friends among his colleagues, but, long before Vietnam, the facility made him a force to be reckoned with and, when the occasion demanded, feared as well. Not even Martin's severest critics deny him that. "He was a terrific operator, one of the best, a genius in working with the bureaucracy," one of them concedes. In his quiet, coldly calculating way, Martin played the power game in State with breathtaking expertise, relying on his wits and the connections those wits won him. Unlike many of his colleagues, Martin was a poor boy, the son of a North Carolina preacher. Shy and reclusive, he studied the Scriptures and the classics—he would quote from both at length to illustrate a point of political or military strategy—and went off to be enlightened at Wake Forest. He emerged from college as something of a liberal, by Southern standards, and, after a brief stint as a newspaperman, went to work for Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal. When the war broke out, Martin enlisted in the Army; as with most of the things Graham Martin tried, he excelled at soldiering; before the war was over, he had risen to the rank of colonel.

In 1947 Martin joined the State Department and was assigned as an administrative officer in the Paris embassy. The post proved to be a fateful one for Martin's career. For in Paris, the ambassador was C. Douglas Dillon, who, impressed with his young aide's civility, courtesy and insatiable appetite for work, took him under his wing. There would be ups and downs in Martin's subsequent career, but, for all practical purposes, success was ensured at that moment. "Once you get to know a guy like Doug Dillon, get him as your patron, you get put on a certain track in the department," one Washington veteran explains. "With that kind of friend, you are destined for big things."

"Martin came to Vietnam with his mind made up, and nothing was going to change it"

Martin's first embassy was Bangkok, where he was named ambassador in 1963, almost at the moment that the American build-up in Southeast Asia was beginning. The ever-supple Thais were leery of committing themselves to any cause, especially one which in the end might prove a losing one. But, with a combination of finesse and courtly prodding, Martin wangled agreements from the Thais for several huge U.S. airbases. Before long, 80 percent of the tonnage dropped on the Ho Chi Minh Trail came from B-52s and fighter-bombers based in Thailand. In return, Martin cooperated with the Thais in keeping the bases off-limits to curious U.S. reporters; for two years, he even denied their existence. Also at the Thais' insistence, final authority for all military operations launched from Thailand was vested in Graham Martin, a status the ambassador enjoyed enormously. This almost unprecedented grant of power made Martin, in effect, the American proconsul, with not only the trappings of office but also a fleet of B-52s at his disposal. Martin did not shrink from using his authority. He battled continually with the American military (who came to call him "CINC-World"—Commander-in-Chief, World), including the secretary of defense. When challenged, he would remind Major General Richard Stilwell, the senior U.S. military man in Thailand, that he, the ambassador, was the personal representative of the President of the United States.

The role made Martin something of a hero to American civilians in Thailand, who saw him as the only thing preventing the total unleashing of the military. Martin, of course, liked to foster that reputation. "He was the most reasonable, sophisticated hawk I ever met," says a journalist who interviewed Martin at the Manila conference in 1966. "Martin could charm the birds. He came damn near to charming me." By the time the journalist saw Martin again a few months later, however, his adopted son had been killed. The image was completely different. "He was bombastic, unreasonable, pounding on the table. It was as if the man had undergone a complete personality change."

After Thailand, Martin was ordered back to Washington to be assistant to the secretary for refugees and migratory affairs, hardly a coveted assignment. But Martin simply bided his time. During his stay in Thailand, he had made another important friend, an apparently washed up politician named Richard Nixon. Nixon came to Thailand several times as a lawyer for Pepsi-Cola, and, according to observers of Martin's career, Martin treated him with a deference normally reserved for a chief of state. The investment paid off. When Nixon became president, the story around the State Department goes, he asked then Secretary of State William Rogers to "do something for Graham Martin." Emissaries were dispatched, and Martin was asked, according to rumor, whether he would like to be ambassador to Afghanistan. Martin replied that surely there must be something more suitable for his talents. The next offer was Greece, and still Martin demurred. Well, came the response, what do you want? "Rome," was Martin's reply. Against the odds, Martin got it.

Martin's tenure in Italy resolved any lingering doubts about his politics, or his style. He had already developed a reputation from his years in Thailand for being ruthless with dissenters. "If an official dared to send back or even draft a position contrary to that taken by the am-

bassador, he'd be writing his own obituary," a former State Department official told a reporter. "It was a reign of terror." What Italy showed was that the veneer of the enlightened liberal, somehow trying to make his way between the communists, on the one hand, and the bomb-them-back-to-the-stone-age boys, on the other, was just that: a veneer. With the death of his son, Martin no longer confronted an impersonal ideology but a personal enemy, and he meant to battle it, even if it drove him to ludicrous lengths. "He went to Italy with a great anxiety, if not fear, of the worldwide communist conspiracy," a former State Department official told one of Martin's journalistic critics. "This resulted in demands to increase CIA operations, demands to increase the size of the embassy, demands to keep U.S. Army elements in Italy at their current strength because their departure might undermine the Italian government and Italy might go communist—all this depended on what the United States did. It was kind of laughable."

Many who worked for Martin were not amused, especially in 1971, when a cable arrived at the embassy from a group of State Department employees who had organized a legal defense fund in memory of a foreign service officer who had committed suicide after being fired without a hearing. At the sight of the cable, Martin flew into a rage and forbade its distribution to the embassy staff. In his own cable to Washington, Martin asserted that the cable reflected "techniques of propaganda which, in other contexts, the whole civilized world has found to be revolting. The purpose of the communication . . . is not to improve, but to destroy."

Right about then, bells should have begun ringing at the State Department. They might well have for any other career ambassador, but Graham Martin, alone among his fellow foreign service officers, was "the President's man," a phrase Martin himself was fond of using. "An ambassador cannot function properly," Martin had written, "as the representative of any agency or department, not even the Department of State." He was answerable only to the President. In short, to God.

Had there been a stronger secretary of state, Martin, President's man or no, might not have lasted. But William Rogers was not one to make waves. Besides, it was generally assumed in the department that Italy would be Martin's final post. Even Martin indicated so by buying a small estate outside Florence, where, in the best traditions of the

The Ambassador.
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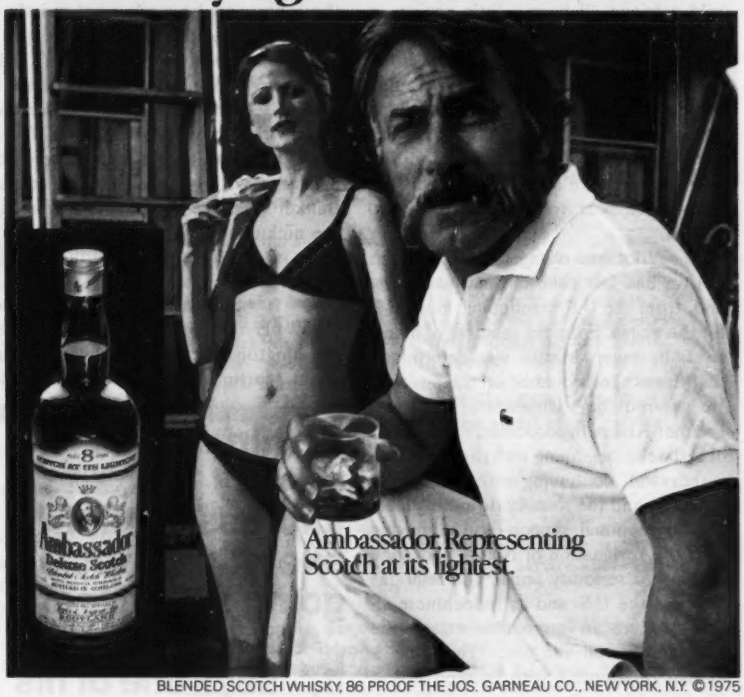

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Caesars, he would live out his retirement a simple man of the soil, surrounded by his vineyards and olive trees. He looked forward to going to Tuscany, Martin once told a friend. "I have a little project in mind. I'm going to cross a Chianti grape with an olive and make a pitless olive that tastes like a glass of Chianti." It was a fine example of what Martin considered humor, and an apt metaphor for the difficulty of his next task. For Richard Nixon had one more assignment for his old friend. He was to be ambassador to Saigon.

A lot had changed since Graham Martin had last been in Southeast Asia, and, from the U.S. standpoint, most of it for the worse. From the moment of his arrival, however, Martin was determined that the accent would be on the positive. He assured the Vietnamese, Thieu and Premier Khiem in particular, that a series of setbacks, beginning with the American withdrawal, continuing with the halt of bombing and the steadily dwindling level of congressional support and climaxing with the resignation of Nixon, had done nothing to seriously impair the relations between the U.S. and its Indochinese allies. And, to an improbable extent, the Vietnamese believed him. "Thieu had a human relationship with Bunker, not at all like Martin," says one of Thieu's closest advisers. "Martin was patronizing. He treated Thieu like a little boy who needed a pat on the head. He was the American Santa Claus who had all sorts of toys for us in his bag, even B-52s, if we needed them." Within the Vietnamese cabinet, Quang Duc Nha, the abrasive 34-year-old information minister and Thieu's closest aide, began arguing that Martin was lying, that, with the passing of Nixon, the Vietnamese had best make their accommodations while they could. Thieu and Khiem dismissed Nha's arguments, suggesting that Nha, who had been educated in the United States and knew the Americans better than any of them, was reflexively anti-American. Nha, however, persisted, and, in time, word of his disaffection reached Martin's ears. The ambassador quickly took the offensive. Nha, he informed Thieu, had alienated the U.S. press and had thereby lessened the chances for increased U.S. aid. Accordingly, Martin strongly recommended that Thieu get rid of him. Thieu complied. In September 1974 Nha was sacked.

Ironically, for all Martin's public concern for Vietnam's fate, his private view of the Vietnamese was a far harsher one. He encouraged his staff to be hardheaded about their friends, to not sentimentalize the Vietnamese—as so many foreign service officers before them had—as a special people ennobled by their predicament. More than once, Martin told his aides, as if to reassure them that the judgments he made were strictly in line with U.S. interests, "I don't give a goddamn about these people." The average Vietnamese seemed to sense it. Martin seldom left Saigon, and his contacts with the Vietnamese, even Thieu, were far more limited than those of his predecessor. In the streets of Saigon, Bunker's yankee coolness had won him the nickname "the refrigerator." Martin was given a new sobriquet: "the freezer."

It was Martin's perceptions, rather than his personality, that troubled Washington. There was a growing unease about Martin's reporting; one of the department's most senior officials privately called it "bullshit." The quarrel was not with Martin's hawkishness, since State was hardly a covey of doves, but with his unshakable, almost eerie optimism. The ambassador seemed particularly out of touch with the realities of domestic U.S. politics. "Those guys might just as well have been on the moon for all they knew about what was going on in Congress," says one former official. "Congress was getting ready to kill them and Martin ignored it. He ignored everything. He came to Vietnam with his mind made up, and nothing was going to change it." And, in fact, when Congress appropriated $700 million in military aid for Vietnam for fiscal 1974-75—half of what Martin had requested—he shrugged it off, telling officials in the embassy not to worry, that when the time came the Administration would extract a minimum $300 million supplemental appropriation to see the Thieu regime through the year. As it turned out, when the time came Congress voted not a dime.

Martin wanted to convey the impression that everything was going swimmingly. "Anyway you slice it," says one of his aides, "it was one helluva mistake"

Throughout 1974, Vietnam was like a patient suffering from long-term, inoperable cancer. The progress of the disease was slow, but unmistakable, with moments of remission followed by long periods of decay and decline. Then, in January 1975, came what later would be counted as the point of no return. Phuc Long, a long-besieged provincial capital, fell to the communists. On the surface, the fall of Phuc Long did not seem an overly important event. The province was obscure and unimportant and, with the exception of its capital city, had been invested by the communists for several years. But, psychologically and militarily, the fall of Phuc Long was of enormous consequence. It was the first provincial capital that had fallen to the communists since the signing of the Paris accords. According to later intelligence reports, the communists were fearful of a violent American response.

They needn't have worried. In Saigon, Martin ordered that the reporting put the battle in the best possible light. In the cables back to Washington, Phuc Long was described not as a defeat, but as a strategic regrouping, and a wise one at that. "Martin wanted to convey the impression that everything was still going swimmingly," says one of his aides. "Maybe he believed it, maybe he just didn't want to panic Congress. Anyway you slice it, it was one helluva mistake." In Washington there were a few rumbles of disapproval over Phuc Long, a statement by the secretary, an expression of concern from the White House, and that, basically, was it. This time, the B-52s were missing from the ambassador's Christmas bag.

Emboldened, the communists moved forward. The signs were becoming increasingly ominous. Perhaps most disturbing were the persistent reports of NLF activity in areas of the Delta which had been deemed secure for years. Like the bad news from Phuc Long, they were discarded. Lehmann, nominally the man in the best position to evaluate their significance, would simply hear none of them. "I know the Delta," he would snap at the morning meetings. "I have walked every foot of that ground. There are no VC there." At that, Lehmann was only keeping in step with his boss. For, several months before, Martin had shifted gears. He had decided that Vietnam's critical problem was economic, rather than military, and, accordingly, ordered up a major push on securing funds for the long-range development of a country which, in fact, was growing smaller with each passing day. The significance of the military developments was consciously downplayed in the embassy's reporting. For a period of four months, beginning in the summer and continuing into the early

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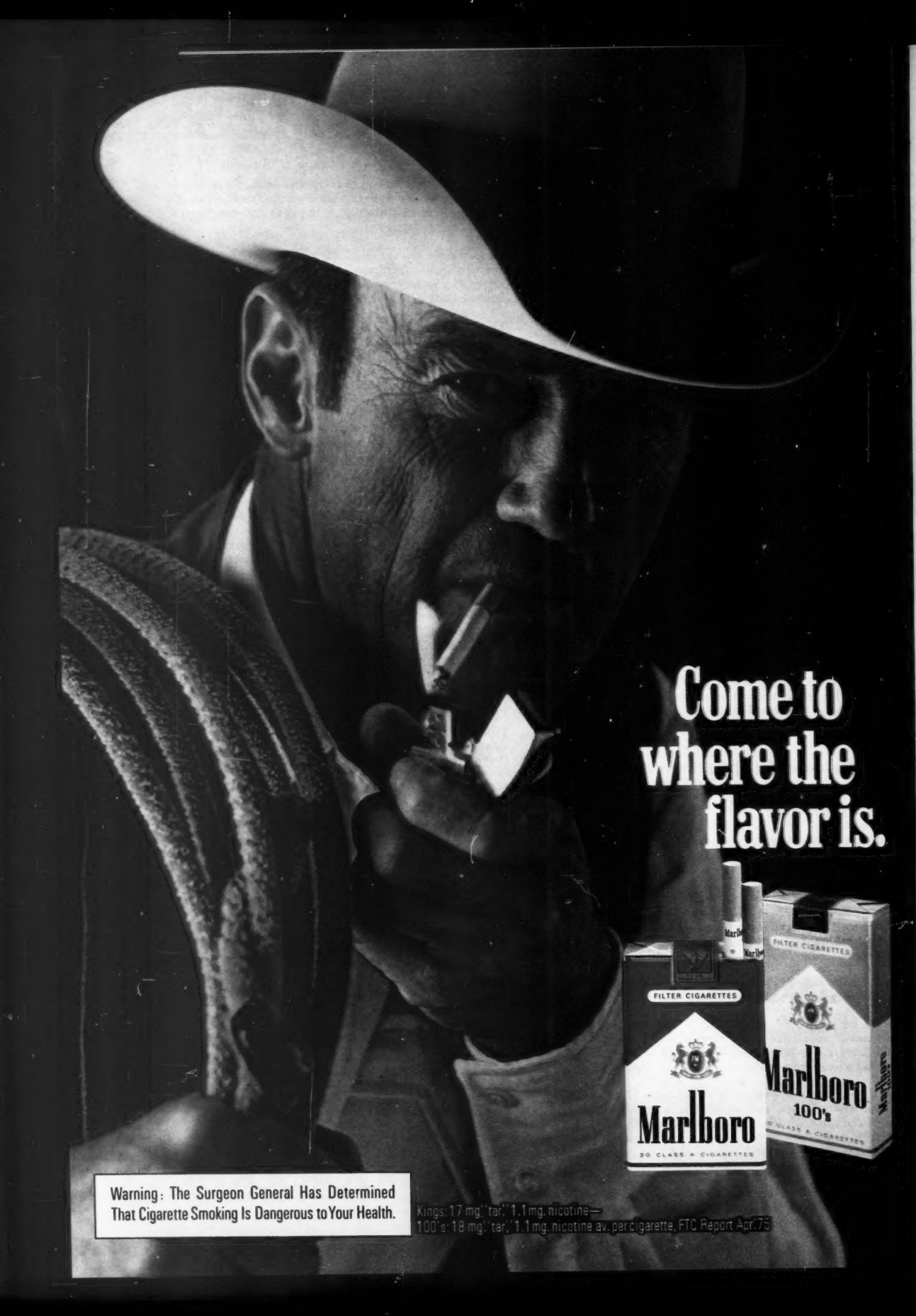
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fall, Martin did not permit a single negative assessment of the Vietnamese military to pass back to Washington. To have reported honestly would inevitably have weakened the case for investing more American dollars in the economy. More to the point, it would also cross the well-laid plans of the ambassador. A new arrival to Martin's staff, not knowing of the ambassador's obsession with the economy, expected to find an embassy wringing its hands over the deteriorating military situation. Instead, he discovered "an Alice in Wonderland quality to what was going on in the embassy." After a few months on the ground, the aide started making oral notes each night on a tape recorder in the certain knowledge that what he was witnessing, in a combination of wonder, amusement, disbelief and horror, had the makings of a terrific book.

Back in Washington, Vietnam was still, as one official describes it, "a back burner problem." In part, the relative unconcern sprang from a reading of the embassy's own reporting, whose optimism was consistently seconded by the CIA's National Intelligence Estimate. Then, too, when compared to neighboring Cambodia, which daily teetered on extinction, Vietnam appeared a veritable safe haven. Finally, and perhaps most crucially, it was, as one source puts it, "difficult to engage the secretary's attention until rather late in the game." Kissinger was clearly bored with Vietnam, and had been for some time. It was one of those lesser problems which could be handled by capable subordinates—in this case, Graham Martin.

In December, however, a government observer with considerable experience in Vietnam made his own firsthand assessment. The view he transmitted to the State Department contrasted sharply with the reports that had been coming out of Saigon. He found a country of skyrocketing inflation and declining morale, an Air Force "rendered virtually useless" by long down times on nearly half the planes and a chronic shortage of spare parts, soldiers that now went on patrol with two grenades, where a year before they had carried ten, and, in many ways most frightening of all, an embassy wholly out of touch with what was going on around it. Back in Washington the official flatly predicted that Vietnam would not survive the summer. At State, he was counted an alarmist.

All the same, the concern was spreading. In February a hastily put-together group of eight congressmen—half of them doves, half of them hawks—was dispatched to Indochina on a fact-finding tour. The group split on a number of points, but, after being exposed to Martin, they were, hawk and dove alike, unanimous on one subject: the American ambassador had to go. Martin put on what was, even for him, an extraordinary performance. He informed the congressmen that corruption, while pesky, was in the long run insignificant. As for political prisoners, Martin claimed there were none in the country, a position he did not alter after Bella Abzug and Don Fraser personally interviewed more than a dozen. He warned the congressmen that many of their colleagues were "dupes of the communists." As for himself—Martin admitted he was controversial. "It's the price you pay," he said, "for being consistently right for the last 40 years." The congressmen were appalled. One of them, Pete McCloskey of California, feared that Martin was gravely ill. "We were walking up the steps of the palace to meet Thieu, and Martin couldn't have walked more than four or five steps, and he was huffing and puffing and wheezing," says McCloskey. "I was afraid he was going to drop over."

Controversial? "It's the price you pay," said Martin, "for being consistently right for the last 40 years"

Instead, it was the country that fell over. On March 3, while Martin was home in North Carolina recovering from dental surgery, the North Vietnamese offensive began. Within days, Ban Me Thuot in the Central Highlands fell, to be followed quickly by Pleiku and Kontum, and the abandonment of all but the coast of II Corps. By the time Martin reached Washington, Hue had gone, too. For a few days, Martin scurried about the capital, personally lobbying key congressmen for more aid. Even now, the old charm had not deserted him. He met with Ben Bradlee, editor of the Washington *Post* and an old friend from their days together in the Paris embassy, and succeeded in extracting a favorable editorial from the *Post*. Martin also announced that, on his return to Vietnam, he would personally fly to Da Nang, as a demonstration of U.S. confidence in the Thieu regime. "Good," one State Department official commented when he heard of Martin's plans. "Maybe the North Vietnamese will shoot him down." As it turned out, neither man got his wish. By the time Martin returned to Vietnam, Da Nang had fallen, and the ARVN was in full flight.

Yet, to all outward appearances, Martin was unperturbed. To his disbelieving and despairing staff, he seemed, on the contrary, positively serene. At his first weekly meeting with his senior aides, Martin urged them to look on the bright side of things. From a military standpoint, he said, the loss of the highlands and the northern provinces was hardly a cause for gloom. They were expensive and difficult to defend, he argued. Why, he had personally urged Thieu himself to give up the highlands. Now, Martin said, Vietnam could concentrate its resources on a defense of the Delta and the region around Saigon, traditionally the country's heartland. It was no time to panic or think of "selling out" to the communists. There were still the long-range development plans to prepare. When one of his staffers timorously informed the ambassador that AID officials in Washington seemed to have shelved the idea for the moment, Martin fired off an angry cable, demanding that the economic proposals be speeded up.

It was that cable, more than anything, that seemed to break Martin's hold over his staff. Until then, he had been able to charm, cow or bully them into submission. He had used his intelligence, his supposed unique view of "the big picture," to deflect and deflate their arguments. Now, none of them needed to read the top secret reports to know what was going on, not when the country was disintegrating before their eyes. They used to excuse Martin's excesses; a few of them, in their most private conversations, half jested that the old man might be a little off in the head. Now, there was no more joking.

While Martin plotted "the defense of the heartland," some of his aides secretly began laying plans for an evacuation, fearing that if Martin discovered them, they would be shipped home. The reporters Martin so detested were privately asked to urge their home offices to pressure the White House into forcing Martin to evacuate Vietnamese employees of the various American news agencies. The reporters hardly needed asking. When it was clear that if Martin did not allow the evacuation of the Vietnamese journalists he would be ordered to by the President, he relented. The Vietnamese were flown out, along with a number of embassy employees Martin's staff had managed to smuggle aboard. Meanwhile, the defense attaché's office and the CIA, without bothering to confer

with Martin, had begun getting their own Vietnamese out aboard secret "black flights."

The real worry was for the Vietnamese employees of the embassy. Martin was adamant in opposing any move which might incite a Da Nang-style panic, and, by his lights, the evacuation of the Vietnamese would do precisely that. As long as he could, Martin ignored the cables that kept coming in from Washington, instructing him to begin planning an orderly evacuation of the Vietnamese. As a result, the dozens of transport planes that flew into Tan Son Nhut each day, delivering precious cargo, were flying away half or two-thirds empty. Had Martin given the word, thousands might have been aboard. In Washington a group of young foreign service officers, all of them veterans of Vietnam, began meeting informally, looking for ways to get around Martin's ban on the evacuation. The immediate problem was Kissinger, who, for the moment, was not disposed to challenging Martin's wisdom. Finally, in desperation, two young FSOs left Washington for Saigon, where, without Martin's knowledge, they organized their own mini-evacuation of several dozen friends and former employees.

Still, Martin delayed. Then, on the morning of April 8, a Vietnamese Air Force plane out of Bien Hoa peeled off and attacked the presidential palace. The two 500-pound bombs dropped on the palace grounds did relatively little damage, but, among the Vietnamese employees of the U.S. embassy, they set off feelings close to panic. When Martin was told that something would have to be done to calm the Vietnamese, he instructed his aides to assure their workers that an evacuation plan was being drawn up at that moment. The aides dutifully carried out the ambassador's orders. "The Vietnamese shouldn't have believed us, they had no reason to believe us, but they did," says an official who was close to Martin during the final days in the embassy. As it turned out, it was the Americans who shouldn't have believed the ambassador. Later, in Washington, one embassy official came across a secret cable from Martin to Kissinger dated April 18, a full ten days after the Vietnamese had been promised they would be evacuated. In it Martin stated that he had no evacuation plan for the Vietnamese, and that he did not intend to draw one up. "I've worked for this government a long time and seen a lot of things," the official said later. "But I never felt dirtied until I read that cable."

Martin was lying to buy time, and he was willing to use any gambit, however cynical, to do it. In early April, he urged Dr. Phan Quang Dan, deputy premier for social welfare, to ease the government's restrictions on orphans leaving the country. Dan later recounted in a letter that Martin "stressed that this evacuation, along with the millions of refugees abandoning communist-controlled zones, will create a shift in American public opinion in favor of the Republic of Vietnam." According to Dan, Martin said that "when these children land in the United States, they will be subject to television, radio and press agency coverage and the effect will be tremendous." Meanwhile, the embassy began collecting atrocity reports. Soon, a steady procession of horror stories, each more grisly than the next, was crackling out over the wires to Washington: policemen beheaded in Da Nang; mass executions of local officials in Ban Me Thuot; grenades being tossed in the midst of captured ARVN after they had been bound hand and foot. In Saigon, however, everything was officially decreed to be calm. "Saigon is not in danger," Martin publicly proclaimed, even as the provincial capitals all around it were falling. Any foreign service officer with the temerity to report otherwise found that his cables to Washington were being censored.

What proved to be the final battle was over nothing more significant than a tree

The purpose of all this maneuvering, Martin reported in his cables, was so that Congress would dislodge the billion and a half dollars necessary to conduct the "heartland defense" for the rest of the fiscal year—an opinion that caused great hilarity in the otherwise somber offices at State. By now, a number of department officials had become openly contemptuous of Martin and, especially those with Vietnam experience, embittered by his continuing refusal to evacuate the Vietnamese. Relations between Washington and the embassy during the final weeks descended to the point where many of Martin's messages came "back channel," directly to the secretary. The Vietnam desk, in turn, started downgrading the classification on the messages it sent to Saigon—in some cases even using the telephone—to get past the Martin blockade.

By mid-April, the flow of refugees leaving Saigon was still a comparative trickle. A few members of Martin's staff feared that not only was there no evacuation plan but that there wouldn't be, ever. "By the way he was acting," one of them says, "I thought it was quite possible that he had made up his mind to go down in flames and take the rest of us along with him." Martin's infrequent contacts with his staff did little to reassure them. With what proved to be less than two weeks of life left in Vietnam, he ordered one of his aides to work up an exhaustive study of restructuring the entire information system of the government of Vietnam. Instead, the aide began to instruct his Vietnamese employees that, when the end came, they might have to make their own evacuation plans.

With time running out, the embassy remained in its air-conditioned dream world. The North Vietnamese had begun shelling the airbase at nearby Bien Hoa when one of the secretaries gently suggested to an embassy officer that perhaps it might not be a bad idea to have the American employees living in outlying neighborhoods double up with those living closer to the embassy. "What's wrong, dear?" the official inquired patronizingly. "Are you afraid?" At that, the secretary decided to leave the country on her own. Incredibly, the embassy did not even make provision to evacuate the dependents of its own employees until nearly the middle of April, and then only after an angry foreign service officer burst into the office of one of Martin's senior aides and threatened to quit unless the women and children were gotten out. When the evacuation plans finally were drawn up, they were full of holes. One morning at a meeting chaired by Lehmann, an embassy official revealed that he had checked one of the designated embarkation points and had found it locked. "I hope you give us the key when the time comes," he said to the embassy's administrative officer, who was handling the evacuation plans. The officer laughed sheepishly and said nothing.

It all came back to Martin. The ambassador not only commanded the embassy, he set its tone. If he was unworried, the people who worked for him were to seem unworried, too. And Martin's lack of concern was genuine. Politics explained much of his opposition to evacuation, but, deep down, Martin thought it foolish as well as dangerous. There was no need to run, he said privately, unless one began running. At least through the summer, Vietnam was going to hold. There would be time to get a deal.

When the North Vietnamese paused in front of Xuan Loc in the third

week of April, it seemed, for a fleeting moment, that Martin's hunch had been right. Martin, at least, took the momentary lull in the fighting as a sign that the communists were looking for a deal, an impression that was backed up by hints coming from the PRG delegation in Paris. French Ambassador Jean Paul Merillon, Martin's neighbor and frequent luncheon partner, agreed with the assessment, and, together and individually, the Frenchman and the American started making the rounds of Vietnamese politicians, searching for a formula of accommodation. The crucial ingredient, however, was Thieu, and Martin, ignoring the advice of CIA station chief Polgar, was not ready to abandon him. By the time Martin agreed that there was no other choice and visited Thieu Sunday evening, the 19th, the communist terms had stiffened. The next evening Thieu resigned.

For the next week, Martin continued to pass optimistic assessments back to Washington. The removal of Thieu, he claimed, had set the stage for a political solution. In Washington very few people were listening. Too late, Martin seemed willing to try anything. He had always shunned the communist members of the International Commission of Control and Supervision. Now, on what was destined to be his last Thursday in Vietnam, he showed up at a cocktail party hosted by the Polish delegation to the ICCS. It was not so much a party as a wake, with a nervous handful of guests. Most of the diplomats who usually came to such affairs had already been evacuated. Even the Vietcong failed to show up. Martin, however, seemed at ease. For little more than an hour, he drank and exchanged pleasantries.

Even as Martin was drinking, the Vietnamese were streaming out of the city. The massive airlift Martin had so opposed had at last begun only after Admiral Noel Gaylor, Commander-in-Chief, Pacific, secretly flew to Saigon to convince Martin there was no other choice. The day before Gaylor's visit, 444 Vietnamese and American civilians were evacuated; the day after, 3,400; the day after that, 4,300.

Polgar thought the Americans ought to have been going even sooner. A tough realist, the CIA chief had never shared Martin's assumptions about Vietnam, and, in the last few weeks, the relationship between them had broken down almost entirely. What proved to be the final battle was over nothing more significant than a tree.

Of course, it was a very handsome tree, a tall lovely tamarind that stood in the embassy parking lot. From his office window on the third floor, Martin could look out on its green branches swaying gently in the hot Saigon air. And now, with communist rockets landing in Saigon, Polgar wanted to cut it down. They had to, Polgar explained, so the parking lot could be cleared for a landing zone for the helicopters. Martin replied heatedly that as long as he was United States ambassador, the tree was going to stand, and hang the helicopters. The argument continued until Polgar decided it was useless to talk further. So, as he had in so many other matters, Polgar ignored Martin. That night, his men cut through most of the tree, leaving only enough to keep it standing. Polgar took care, however, that the cut in the tree was on the side away from the ambassador's window. Should Martin look out the next morning, he would be unaware of the CIA's handiwork.

The next morning turned out to be the Americans' final one in Vietnam. At 6:00 a.m., Martin called an emergency meeting of his senior aides. Two hours before, the communists had begun to shell the runways at Tan Son Nhut with their big, Russian-made 130-mm cannon. Ammunition dumps and fuel depots had been blown up with huge, rolling balls of fire, and a number of planes on the ground had been destroyed. The question now was whether the runways were usable. If not, a helicopter evacuation from the embassy, the dreaded final option, was the only means of escape. Martin said that reports of damage to the field, which the Defense Attaché Office said was severe, were exaggerated. He added that, even now, he found it hard to believe the communists did not want a political settlement. "Martin had all the right conclusions," an aide commented afterward. "He was just about two years too late." Polgar argued with Martin, saying that a helicopter evacuation should begin immediately. Martin dismissed him. He, the ambassador, would inspect Tan Son Nhut personally.

It was a gesture worthy of King Canute. Rather than command the sea to roll back, Martin would command the artillery. Just how futile the trip was became evident by the time Martin reached the airport two hours later. As he got out of his car, small-arms fire was crackling less than half a mile away. Shells had once more begun landing on the tarmac. What Martin saw was millions of dollars in U.S. aid and effort quite literally going up in smoke. He had

put his hand in the wound. There was no longer any doubt.

By 10:30, Washington was informed of Martin's findings. The moment for the final option had arrived. On carriers out in the South China Sea, pilots sprinted for their helicopters.

In Saigon the now-familiar scenes of panic were beginning. Vietnamese, first by the hundreds, finally by the thousands, surged toward the white embassy fortress. Only the prompt arrival of several hundred Marines in full battle gear kept them from swarming over the 10-foot wall surrounding the huge embassy compound. Soon, Navy Phantoms were screaming over the city in low passes. From the roof of the Caravelle Hotel, where so many tales had been told and retold for so many years, a few remaining U.S. journalists looked out and, in the near distance, watched the North Vietnamese tanks make their final advance on what was about to become Ho Chi Minh City.

Inside the embassy, the CIA men were destroying coding and communications equipment with thermite grenades. In another office, officials of the Agency for International Development were giddily burning millions of dollars of U.S. currency that had been destined for the Vietnamese government. The explosions and smoke from the burning money and documents, mingled with the stench of tear gas, the sound of beating rotors and the cries that wafted in from outside, lent a surreal quality to the embassy. "You couldn't resist the analogy," one American said later. "It was like watching Rome burning."

Martin, as always, was ice calm. As the mob howled outside, he decided to go home to put a few things together. Driving proved impossible. His chauffeured car was driven back from the gate when the Marines holding back the Vietnamese were nearly overrun. Unruffled, Martin abandoned his car and, exiting by a back way, walked the three blocks to his home. He retrieved a pagoda statue, one of his favorite possessions, from his study and walked across the street to present it to his friend, Merillon, as a farewell token. An hour and a half later, Martin returned to the embassy, appearing to have showered and shaved and wearing what looked to be a freshly pressed shirt. Behind him came his cook and two security men, carrying the ambassador's suitcase and briefcase. The bulk of Martin's remaining belongings reportedly had been packed and shipped the same week he had assured the Vietnamese that there was no danger to Saigon. In the rush, Martin left behind his small black poodle, Nit Noy (Thai words meaning "a small, insignificant thing"), but a thoughtful aide evacuated the dog on a later helicopter.

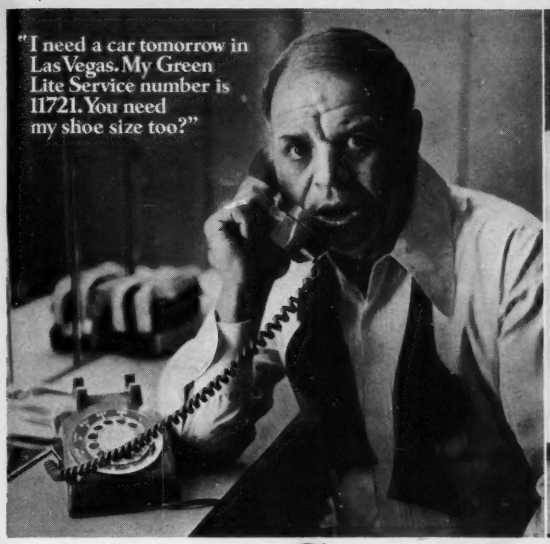
Back in his now-stripped third floor office, Martin bade farewell to a group of his aides, a quiet word, a soft, reassuring pat on the back for each. It was they who were leaving, not he. Weeks before, Martin had told a visitor that, when the moment came, he would take out "a million Vietnamese," and then himself. Maybe it was a final delusion, a last-minute admission that he did give "a goddamn" about them after all, but, on Martin's orders, the embassy kept loading Vietnamese aboard the choppers, long after the last American was to have gone. At the White House, where Ford, Kissinger and Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger were staying in touch with the evacuation, there was growing anxiety about Martin's delays. Already, the chopper pilots were on the verge of physical and mental exhaustion. Three heat-seeking missiles had been fired at them and only by the purest of chance had disaster been avoided. Hours after the original deadline had expired, a strongly worded message went out from the White House, informing Martin that he would be sent one final flight of 19 helicopters and no more. Schlesinger added that the last lift should depart Saigon no later than 3:45 p.m., Washington time. Apparently, the secretary had forgotten that the ambassador was the President's man. The appointed hour came and went, and Martin was still loading Vietnamese. Finally, at 4:45, Martin received a blunt message from his Commander-in-Chief: "Load only Americans from now on."

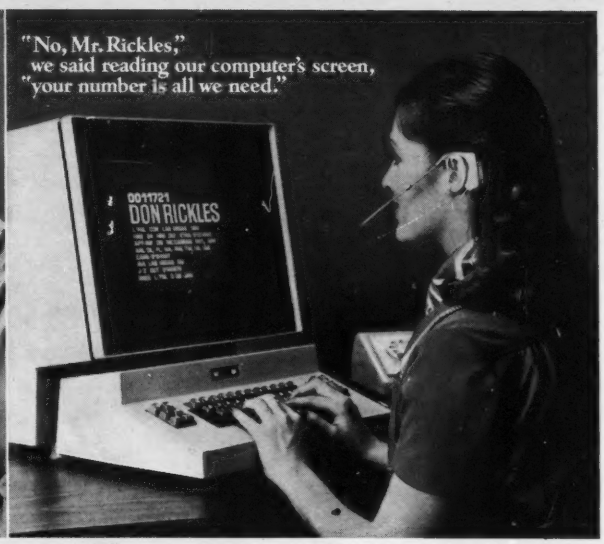
At 5:00, battered briefcase in hand, surrounded by a few close aides, Martin went into the yard where once had stood his beloved tamarind tree. It was impossible to tell what he was feeling. The steel-grey eyes, which, one of his aides said, "grabbed hold of you and bored through you," were shrouded in dark sunglasses. Tucked under Martin's right arm were the embassy's folded colors. The Marine loadmaster snapped a crisp salute. The ramp came up. Soon the rising whine of the turbines drowned out all sound and thought.

Martin insisted that the damage to the airfield had been exaggerated. He, the ambassador, would inspect Tan Son Nhut personally

At the regular White House briefing a few days later, a newsman asked whether the President approved of his ambassador's conduct in Vietnam. Ron Nessen, the press secretary, replied that nothing had happened to shake the President's confidence in Ambassador Martin. As Nessen put it: "The President thinks the results speak for themselves."

Graham Martin's reaction could not be learned. He had gone back to Tuscany, as the Caesars had before, home to cross the olive with the grape. ●





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The memorial casualties

Canandaigua, New York—Building Number 5 is a huge 19th-century brick and oak Gothic. The doorways are immense, and the doorknobs can contain a whole face and then throw the face back at you, twisted, grimacing, as though invisible demons had flown into your ears, eyes, nose. The demons inside Building Number 5 are, however, anything but invisible. They came in the form of shells, mortar shells, spent casings filled with deathly white powders.

White as ghosts, the men sit in the great hall, 1,200 men, wearing bathrobes, pajamas, old bulky sweaters five sizes too large, one bedroom slipper, a flannel shirt donated by the local women's charity, a cross, a cheap black plastic cigarette holder without any cigarette. These are the members of a very exclusive club, 1,200 of the millions of veterans around the United States who spent their Memorial Day in similar halls, veterans hospitals, great cathedral-like halls which look like sets for some Arthurian romance.

Here, in Canandaigua, New York, the veterans wait for the arrival of Mister George Jessel, Toastmaster General of the U.S. And Mister Georgie Jessel does not disappoint them. He arrives only a few seconds after 8:00 and when he creaks onto the stage, those vets who are able applaud and stomp their feet.

"I was decorated three times," Mr. Jessel says, in a voice that sounds as though it comes from the crypt. "Twice I was decorated on the arm, and the last time I was in Vietnam, I was decorated by the Viet Cong on the ass."

There is scattered laughter, most of it from where the loudest applause comes, the first three rows. After row three, there is not much laughter at all. On the faces of most of the men is something incalculable, unspeakable. There is no smile for Georgie, and there is no hatred or discontent. There is no light in the eyes, no diffidence in the mouth,nothing brazen, nothing sad. There are simply faces, hundreds and hundreds of faces, that stare blankly into the light of the stage, the way a fly's eyes sail uncontrollably toward a lantern. These are faces with lines, deep lines, lines around the eyes, and lines down at the mouth, on some faces so deep they look as though they were drawn in with magic marker.

Jessel walks stiffly across the stage and stares out into his audience.

"It's so good to be here," he says, slowly, very slowly.

He does a couple more jokes, low burlesque comedy, and the same men laugh again.

In the next to last row, not one man moves, no one even smiles. Jessel keeps the patter coming, but the "last-row men" simply sit there, staring out into the dim yellow light. Finally, an old vet gets up and starts walking around and around in the aisle. He wears a shredded yellow shirt and hideous, baggy brown slacks, which are open at the fly. As Jessel's monologue drones on, the grey-haired vet begins a strange little dance. On tiptoes he goes around and around, until from behind the last row, emerging from a shadow, comes a fiftyish looking overweight nurse. She moves forward like a tank, brushing aside the educational TV cameraman; when she gets within three feet, the vet looks up at her, and in those same little mincing steps, scurries back to his seat.

Jessel starts in with another joke:

"There was a guy from Hollywood who had trouble with his . . . I don't want to offend anybody . . . his erection . . . ."

As he launches into his lame ancient monologue, a grey-haired vet in the back row begins yelling out names.

"Lana Turner in *Madame X*," the vet yells.

Jessel keeps going, but the vet is sitting up on his chair now, grotesquely balanced like a gargoyle on the eave of a church.

"Susan Hayward in *I Want To Live*, Mayor Jimmy Walker of New York, Tyrone Power in *The Courtship of Miles Standish*."

Another vet turns slowly and stares at his friend.

"You better be quiet, Jack," he says. "They could throw you outta here."

Jack stops yelling for a second and puts his head down into his huge, calloused hands.

"Throw me out," he says. "They gonna throw me out, huh?"

"They could throw you out, Jack," his friend says again.

"Yeah, I been in here 19 years, and they are gonna throw me out? Otto Graham of the Cleveland Browns, you goddamned idiot!"

"Now," says Georgie. "I want you to meet a beautiful little girl who has traveled the, ah, world over with me. She's going to sing and dance for you.

"And here she is, Miss Sharon Finney."

This time a few more men are able to cheer loudly. I start to move over to the other side, but a nurse cuts me off.

"I noticed you was writing some stuff about the guy who was yelling," she says.

"Yeah. What's wrong with him?"

"Him?" she rolls her eyes. "He's mental."

She points her index finger at her ear and makes a "cuckoo" sign. The universal burlesque of mental illness. Universal cruelty.

I get another seat, a better vantage point to watch Miss Sharon Finney, dressed in a red-sequined gown, her huge bosoms spilling out of the cups. She prances back and forth on the stage, and in front of me one of the vets starts rubbing his crotch and laughing. Behind him there is another man who sits with his head cocked at a grotesquely painful angle. It is almost parallel to his shoulder. His eyes are open, but they are as blank as slate. His mouth is twisted into a terrible sneer, as if he has seen something so horrible that it is forever in front of him.

"Waaaal," says Miss Finney, tuning her cheap guitar. "I want to sing a little song for you. I'm sure you all remember 'The Tennessee Waltz.' "

"Sing 'My Mother's Eyes,' " someone yells. "Sing 'My Mother's Eyes.' "

"Well, I'd like to sing everything you all want," she says. "Just like I'd like to talk with you all . . . you cute little darlings . . . but I've got to go soon. So let me sing this one."

The vet who was yelling for "My Mother's Eyes" slumps down. For that brief hysterical moment he looked alive . . . crazed, out of control, but alive. Now, his request denied, he sags and stares at the floor.

Sharon Finney launches into "The Tennessee Waltz." Her voice is shrill, off-key, and she reduces the song to one long screech of pain. In the middle of her performance, one of the vets gets up and walks around in a circle again. He seems to be dancing, one leg dragging behind him.

In a second a couple more people come out of their seats. A young man, probably a Viet vet, walks around and then sits back down and rubs his chin. Another man holds his crotch; he isn't masturbating, but simply holding on, as if to reassure himself that he is still there.

The show goes on; the vets clap for the girl who plays the accordian. They walk in and out of the bathroom, and every so often Jack yells out still another name.

"Peter Lorre in *The Hands of Orlac*."

Then, one hour later, after Jessel has made his patriotic speech, cried all over himself, the lights go on, and General George is gone.

The men slowly drag themselves from the hall. The man with the cocked head is picked up by a nurse and led out, as though he were blind. One of the vets pulls out his harmonica and begins a long slow blues. Up front at the stage, a vet cries out for Miss Sharon Finney. She comes out from behind the curtain. In the light she looks much older.

"Waaal, what have you got for me?" she says.

"I've got a pen, lady," the vet says.

He puts it in her palm, and then she squeals with delight, and feels the man's pencil-thin bicep.

"Oooh, you big thing," she says. "You big thing."

Behind me one of the other vets is screaming.

"Lock me up," he says. "Lock me up, goddamn you. I been locked up all my life."

Miss Sharon Finney smiles at him. "Having a bad night?" she says.

Two attendants come and hustle the screaming vet out of the hall.

"The show is all over, Jerry," one of them says. "It's all over for this year."

—By Robert Ward

ILLUSTRATION BY BILL NELSON

Equipped with a device called "Hi Fido," top dog psychologist Dare Miller makes $50-an-hour house calls to attend to his maladjusted canine clientele

Games animals play

By Paul Boorstin

"Thank God you're here!" Chic, thirtyish Barbara James greets the long-awaited visitor at the door, her fragile smile veiling desperation. The moment she feels his handshake, firm and warm as a prairie preacher's, she knows that Dr. Dare Miller is a man to be trusted with even her most intimate personal problems. Though his aqua suit, turquoise ring and diamond stickpin are more flamboyant than Mrs. James might have expected, Dr. Miller's chiseled profile has a senator's strength, and his eyes are the same honest blue as the sky of his native Wyoming. "Where's the patient?" Dr. Miller asks, and his soothing drawl has a mellow resonance far beyond his 47 years. "Where's Oswald?" Taking a deep breath, Mrs. James unbolts a side door, and a snarling, snapping ball of psychotic fluff lunges skyward with tiny paws. Mrs. James swats Oswald away like a yellow-jacket, sending him skittering across the room. Cowering submissively behind a wastebasket, the terrier first stares in awe at Dr. Miller, then approaches him prayerfully, wriggling like a caterpillar, and pees on the rug. "Piddling is a form of ambivalence," Dr. Miller explains, "a sign Oswald doesn't want to be dominated by his master." Mrs. James runs for a mop.

Dog psychologist Dare Miller shuns the analyst's couch, preferring instead to visit canines at home in their natural environment, where he can best help them adjust to life among humankind. In years past he was summoned only when a dog was teething on the mailman or masticating Chippendale chairs. But in Los Angeles today, Dr. Miller often makes his $50-an-hour house calls to help those who, like Mrs. James and Oswald, simply feel "out of touch" with each other. Barbara James and Oswald are not their real names, of course. Like all professionals, Dr. Miller keeps the identities of his four-pawed patients and their human masters scrupulously confidential.

Inspired by Freud, this psychologist has concluded that a dog's early puppyhood molds his adult behavior. A whelp should leave the litter for a human home at the age of six weeks. If he goes sooner, he will be hopelessly narcissistic, and if later, the canine will attempt to dominate a human master. When Dr. Miller learns that Oswald came to the household at the age of eight weeks, a time he calls "the vulnerable period of trauma," he is less than optimistic. Zhivago, an old black Labrador, interrupts the consultation, shuffling over to nuzzle Barbara James, who strokes him gently behind the ears. Oswald snaps jealously at the Labrador's flanks. Dr. Miller notices Zhivago is licking a lame right paw, and Mrs. James surmises the Labrador is suffering from arthritis. But Dr. Miller shakes his head. "I suspect it's psychosomatic."

A dog can be a hairy emotional football in any family, and Dr. Miller is often called upon in bitterly contested divorce hearings to decide who should be awarded custody of the canine. After in-depth consultation with Barbara James, the root of Oswald's neurosis is finally revealed. Mrs. James has recently married, becoming the second wife of a real estate man. When she entered the new household, she brought along her terrier. Now, her husband's son Billy is expressing resentment against his new mother by acting hostile toward her dog Oswald. And Oswald is venting his puppy angst

against both man and beast. Once this tangled web of dog-family interrelationships is unraveled, healing will be possible. Unfortunately, Billy is too busy for therapy because of prior Little League commitments, but Oswald's treatment can begin immediately.

At Dr. Miller's insistence, Mrs. James coaxes the terrier to walk with her in circles, in a curious minuet. This is what Dr. Miller calls his *master image pattern*, designed to diagnose Oswald's personality. Because the dog struts willingly in circles to the right, but refuses to be led counterclockwise to the left, Dr. Miller concludes that Oswald is an extrovert. Only by patiently training the dog to stroll in circles in *both* directions can his personality be properly "balanced." When the dizzy, confused terrier finally crumples to the ground, Mrs. James scruffs him behind the ears: "Good boy!" The hour is up. Oswald and Zhivago refrain from seeing Dare Miller to the door, but their mistress overflows with gratitude. "Doctor," she whispers, "I'm thinking of having. . . puppies!"

In his blue Lincoln Continental, Dr. Miller cruises down Sunset Boulevard to a lavish Hawaiian modern mansion in Bel Air. Like human psychiatry in its infancy, dog psychology is still largely reserved for the wealthy and *au courant*. "Rrrowf!" Wolfgang and Raquel, two hyperkinetic Afghans, tackle Dr. Miller as he opens the carved teak door. Sally Danforth darts among the manic canines like a scared rabbit. "Raquel recognizes you!" she shouts above the salivating snarls. "If Raquel could read and write, she'd be president!" The dogs rebound off the walls, gamboling about the house unchecked, and the shell-shocked Mrs. Danforth barricades herself in the lanai. There, she recounts the trauma of stepping into squishy pretzels on the stairs at midnight, and the shock of catching Raquel guzzling water out of the toilet bowl. Like many of Dr. Miller's clients, Mrs. Danforth has engaged his services to teach the dogs who's boss. The secret, the psychologist believes, is "establishing a good teacher-student relationship" between master and canine. Each Afghan must be dealt with separately, to keep the number of egos to a minimum, so Mrs. Danforth locks up Wolfgang before ushering Raquel into the lanai.

As her mistress and Dr. Miller discuss the intimate details of the dog's toilet training, Raquel preens haughtily on a chaise longue. "It's a good idea to associate a word with her defecation, such as *toy toy* or *outsky*," the psychologist counsels. "The only way to know how much to feed Raquel is to count her bowel movements. If the number of bm's exceeds the number of meals, the dog's being overfed." Mrs. Danforth boasts she's getting one well-formed stool from Raquel per day. "Excellent," Dr. Miller congratulates. "It *does* make scooping poop a lot more pleasant," Mrs. Danforth admits, blushing modestly. Raquel snores, disdaining any part in the anal hair-splitting, as the dog psychologist outlines his "Four P's of Toilet Training" (Place, Purpose, Pee and Praise). Praise is all-important.

It is time for the sacrament of Dr. Miller's canine dogma. He removes from his pocket a small chain that looks like a teenager's ID bracelet. Attached to the copper-colored chain links are two charms, one a flat bauble in the form of a bell, the other a tiny triangle. The device retails for $12.50 at pet stores nationwide, under the trade name of "Sound Rx" or "Hi Fido," and was patented by Dr. Miller in the mid-'60s. To use Hi Fido, the master alternately clinks the chain in the palm of his hand and throws it at the dog while issuing a command. After being hit with the chain a few times, the creature learns that when he hears the clink of metal he had better knuckle under. Soon, simply by sounding the chain, without throwing it, a master can get his pet to at least pay attention, if not obey. Dr. Miller calls the chain a "mechanical transducer" and insists that it is fashioned from "exotic metals" designed to make a sound at the precise frequency of 34,200 cycles per second. The psychologist explains that this frequency affects the dog "subliminally," making him receptive to any command that accompanies the sound. Though scientific authorities do not accept these claims, the public is buying mechanical transducers like hotcakes, and Dr. Miller's invention grosses an estimated $100,000 a year through sales in pet stores, by mail order and from the occasional vet.

Dr. Miller is often called upon in bitter divorce hearings to decide who should get custody of the canine

"I want to teach Raquel to C-O-M-E," Mrs. Danforth spells in a whisper, dreading that the Afghan will overhear her, as the dog opens a suspicious eye. "Raquel come, Raquel come, Raquel COME, Raquel *COME!*" Dr. Miller chants like a Buddhist monk, sometimes linking the chain in his hand, sometimes lobbing it at the dog. When Raquel finally condescends to flop down on the rug at her feet, Mrs. Danforth is thunderstruck. It is the first time the dog has ever kowtowed to a human.

"Now we're ready for Door Dashing," Dr. Miller announces cheerfully. Mrs. Danforth eyes him in horror. "Door Dashing" is the technical term Dr. Miller uses to describe a domesticated carnivore taking flight over the threshold. Door Dashing is one of Raquel's predilections, and it was also the unfortunate addiction of her immediate predecessor, who was run over by a truck. Alternately clinking the chain and heaving it at the dog, Dr. Miller coaxes the Afghan to venture a few feet out the door without running away. "It's a miracle!" Mrs. Danforth murmurs, afraid to break the spell. Then suddenly, they're off! A Door Dash extravaganza, as Raquel gallops across the cobbled driveway and onto the winding street like a hound of hell. The dog psychologist gallops off in hot pursuit, a blue blur in the wind. Tiffany bracelets ajangle, Mrs. Danforth scrambles to the three-car garage and dives into a powder-grey Mercedes 280. BAROOM! She backs the car up the driveway, searing rubber, and screeches around a corner, narrowly dodging a pink Cadillac Eldorado and almost mowing down Dr. Miller, who is sprinting along the asphalt shoulder. He jumps in beside her, exhilarated by the thrill of the chase, unable to conceal his admiration for the graceful creature that has eluded him. "She's one of the fastest animals I ever. . . ," he pants, but before he can catch his breath, the car's sudden acceleration plasters him against the leather bucket. They spot Raquel in the distance, sashaying across Sunset Boulevard in rush-hour traffic, the shriek of brakes and blare of horns tracing the dog's hazardous trajectory across four frenzied lanes. Mrs. Danforth runs a red light, and when they are within range the psychologist leaps out. "Here girl!" Dr. Miller beckons, risking death from the traffic to swoop down on the fugitive. "This escape *vaccinated* her psychologically," Dr. Miller explains, when at last the dog is stowed safely on the leather seat behind them. His brow wrinkled in concern, he observes the Afghan closely as they drive back home.

A Los Angeles free lance, Boorstin's last piece for New Times *was on a school that trains TV commercial actors.*

Back in the kitchen of Mrs. Danforth's Bel Air mansion, Miller squirts Palmolive dishwashing liquid on a handful of mechanical transducer bracelets, scrubbing vigorously between his palms to work up a frothy lather. "When they get all gummy, they lose their proper tone," he tells Mrs Danforth, and at his request, to provide that extra shine, she squirts a fresh lemon on the bracelets. Dr. Miller struggles to schedule their next appointment. Mrs. Danforth will be busy at the Schick Institute kicking her smoking habit and she is also taking intensive juggling lessons. "Next Thursday?" he suggests, but she can't commit herself. "I may be going to Australia. For the eclipse." Dr. Miller takes pride in the jet-set lifestyle of many of his clients, past and present, including stars like Bob Hope, Katharine Hepburn and Kirk Douglas. In his unpublished memoirs, a melange of case histories, personal reminiscences and behavioral theory (sample chapter: "The Doberman Gestalt"), Miller recalls his favorite client of all: "Ronald and Nancy Reagan used my services, even before he became governor of the state of California . . . Ronald Reagan was more than good with both people and animals, he was excellent. . . I knew that he could not help but be a good leader, governor, president or whatever, long before he proved it. I based my prediction on the old adage, 'A man that is good with dogs is a man that is even better with people.' "

With a doctorate in psychology from the now-defunct College of Philosophy in Kansas City, Missouri, Dare Miller is top dog psychologist in a profession so new that no degree or licensing requirements yet exist. Miller modestly confides he makes up to $3,200 a month from his dog-family therapy, plus royalties from selling his mechanical transducer. Miller's former public relations man, William E. Campbell, has opened his own practice to meet the demand, and he too is swamped. Although traditional animal behaviorists look askance at Dr. Miller's theories and methods, the public keeps right on paying for a service they demand.

The dog psychologist cruises from Bel Air to Beverly Hills, past a bus stop where a sullen group of black and Chicano maids await the number 176 to Watts. Not all of Dr. Miller's clients are wealthy or charismatic. Some suffer hardship to scrape together the $50 an hour (or $250 for six consultations, payable in advance) for his visits. The smog thickens as he navigates the freeway to the run-down Echo Park district of Los Angeles, and the modest home of Mrs. Eleanor Ross, a tall, grey-haired widow who lives alone with her dogs. She hobbles to meet Dare Miller at the door, her toes bandaged and swollen. Eleanor's left foot was the bone of contention in a recent scrap between her old mongrel Joe and a new Great Dane she has just bought named Caesar. "Dr. Miller," Mrs. Ross pleads with sad dark eyes, "I want *peace*."

The psychologist listens compassionately, his hands clasped, his head cocked to one side like a priest in a confessional. In seconds the solution is on Dr. Miller's lips. "We'll *recreate* the incident and break down the dogs' hostility toward each other." In what may be the first recorded case of canine psychodrama, Mrs. Ross crouches uneasily in an old armchair with her mutt Joe panting on her lap, primed to repeat the painful incident, except this time her wounded foot is tucked safely out of harm's way. Dr. Miller coaxes the Great Dane toward Eleanor Ross, while Caesar glares at his enemy on her lap, growling under his breath. Joe bares his fangs, and the dogs' haunches tighten for the clash. A split second before the explosion, Dr. Miller clanks the mechanical transducer chain in his hand, throws it to the ground and retrieves it, repeating the ritual again and again. "Kerplunk, KERPLUNK, *KERPLUNK!*" Soon, the dogs are so distracted by his mystifying performance that they break off hostilities and lounge together on Mrs. Ross' solar plexus, their vendetta forgotten. She hugs the dogs and rejoices, "Dr. Miller, you've restored harmony to my life!"

Dr. Miller notices what looks like a bloodstain on Joe's brow. Running his fingers through the mongrel's matted fur, he sees the mark is only lipstick. "I smooched him," Mrs. Ross confesses, "for being such a good doggie." The widow gently shoos Caesar and Joe from the room. "I think we *both* deserve a Scotch and soda," she says, "don't you?" and whips out a bottle.

Bone weary, raking handfuls of canine hair from his lapels, Dare Miller has earned a drink. Perhaps the reason for this dog psychologist's dedication lies rooted deep in his childhood. Growing up on a Wyoming ranch, his life was saved more than once by an American Shepherd dog named Bronzy who would valiantly guide him home through howling blizzards. Considering Bronzy's exploits on his behalf, and Dr. Miller's own prosperous career helping Bronzy's brethren since, it is not surprising that this dog psychologist finds in all canines a spark of the divine. "Remember," Dr. Dare Miller likes to say, "dog is God spelled backwards." ●

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FREE-FIRE ZONE

A symbol of urban decay and neglect, New York's South Bronx is so far gone that its inhabitants are putting the match to it—4,100 fires so far this year. It's the apocalypse by implosion

By David Black

Dawn in the South Bronx in New York City. The sky is milky white, the color of the aerated water from the taps in the tenements in this neighborhood—the taps that work, that is. Twenty percent of the homes here are without water.

But water is sprinkling from a fire hydrant, and a woman in a shapeless white gown is crouched in the gutter catching it in an empty coffee can. The building behind her looks abandoned. The front door is hanging on broken hinges. Piles of garbage litter the hall, which stinks of urine. Behind smashed panes of glass are scorched, flaking walls. A refrigerator is wedged in a second-story window.

Her coffee can filled, the woman disappears into this building. Only two windows in the front are intact. First floor right. That must be her apartment.

To the right and to the left of her building are rubble lots. Webs of pipes, twisted masses of wire, planks which, collapsed in a heap, look like a giant's game of pick-up-sticks. And bricks. Thousands, tens of thousands of bricks. the remains of buildings that were gutted by fires and then torn down.

Three teenaged dudes turn onto the street from Willis Avenue. They are dressed alike—black shoes, black slacks, powder blue shirts, white sports coats, black clip-on bow ties, each unclipped from one collar wing, all hanging at the same angle. When we pass, they give me a puzzled look, and then in concert they snap on exaggerated grins.

At the corner, before I turn onto Willis Avenue, I glance back. They are fastidiously picking their way across one of the abandoned lots. One bends down—hunting for treasures in the rubble? They look surrealistic in their fancy clothes, standing in a wasteland.

Fifteen minutes later, when I walk back along that block on my way to my car, the three dudes are gone and, flickering very orange in the early blue light of morning, is a small fire.

Like many slums in America, the South Bronx could be the set of a science fiction movie: a city after the holocaust. The buildings with their blank, burned-out windows look more like caves—or hives—than homes. Collapsed roofs, crumbling walls, staircases that climb up to missing second stories. And fires.

For 13 years, the South Bronx has been burning, but in the past few years the number of fires has increased drastically. In 1974 there were over 12,300 reported fires in the area, 20 percent more than there were the previous year.

New Times. The mouse that roars.

Superman we are not.

But that doesn't mean NEW TIMES isn't busting evil in the chops, fighting for the little guy, stripping the pants off phonies, generally shaking hell out of the establishment.

Like a mighty mouse, we are small but powerful feisty. Out of all proportion to size, we make waves. Strike fear in evil hearts. Give the tremble to fat cats. Shake the rafters. The Mouse That Roars, that's us.

Some recent roars.

Every two weeks, NEW TIMES comes along with a stick or two of dynamite in its fist.

There was our story on "The Ten Dumbest Congressmen," with NEW TIMES' nomination for King of Dumb. You should have heard the screams on that one, including a well-attended press conference called by the King himself. There was "Prescription Payola," about doctors who are willing to risk your life for a color TV. There was "Southie Is My Home Town," a look at the people of South Boston you didn't find in any of the other media. (After a century of getting the shaft, maybe they had reasons for coming off as brawling racists.)

In "The Little Camera That Couldn't," NEW TIMES dissected Polaroid's SX-70, as a symbol of a consumer economy gone wild. In "A Wallace Is a Wallace Is a Wallace," we looked underneath the new moderate George and found—guess what—the same old George. In "Happy Days Are Here Again," we saw the new depression as upbeat—a chance for new lifestyles and the whole Whole Earth thing. In "Zen and the Art of the Perfect Backhand," we told you how to trust your body and ignore your old tennis instructor.

"The Gourmet Freeze-Out" ripped the foil off the big restaurant rip-off that's serving up mass-produced frozen dishes as expensive house specialties. "The Consulting Con Game" laid bare a cushy professorial racket. "They Shoot Ten-Year Olds, Don't They?" was a heartwarming look at New York's shootin' cops with their 007 license to kill just about anybody they want to. "That Championship Season" stripped the cover-up from the sex scandal that decimated Notre Dame's football team.

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Our bright, brash, talented writers and columnists—like Robert Sam Anson, Jesse Kornbluth, Marcia Seligson, Larry King, Amanda Spake, Jim Kunen, Mark Goodman, Frank Rich, Janet Maslin and Nina Totenberg—have one thing in common. They're unafraid. They'll plunge into anything, take chances and stands, crawl way out on limbs. Sure, NEW TIMES may fall on its face sometimes. But never on its knees!

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NewTimes

The Mouse that Roars

In the first third of this year, 4,100 fires have already been reported. And recently, in a three-hour period, the Bronx had 40 reported fires.

From the top landing of a fire escape, you could gaze out at five fires burning at the same time, flaring over a landscape that has frequently been compared to Berlin or Dresden after the saturation bombings of World War II.

But this war was hardly a clash of conventional armies and weapons. Rather, the South Bronx is suffering from a war of attrition, a peculiarly American epidemic called urban rot, the inner-city desolation that has been decaying cities across the country. And the disease has flourished in its most virulent form here.

Long before the area began burning with such ferocity day by day, the five square miles called the South Bronx was a dangerous passage between the streamlined glitter of Manhattan's East Side and the quiet lawns of Westchester's suburban estates. Made up principally of black and Hispanic ghettos, the community is part of the pit into which New York shoves the people it has nothing else to do with—the northernmost outpost in a line of slums that starts with Spanish Harlem, merges into Harlem proper, jumps a river and becomes the South Bronx.

In the 18th century, this area was farmland, owned by a few wealthy families. In the 1850s a large portion of the land was sold to recently arrived German immigrants who traveled up from Manhattan on the newly constructed Harlem and New Haven Railroad. Thirty years later, the Third Avenue El—an aboveground subway—opened up the South Bronx even more. Jewish immigrants, escaping from the slums of lower Manhattan, poured into the less crowded, tree-lined streets.

In the 1950s, blacks from Harlem and Puerto Ricans from Spanish Harlem repeated the pilgrimage from Manhattan northward. Today, 65 percent of the 400,000 residents of the South Bronx are Puerto Ricans, Cubans or some other Hispanic group, and most of the remaining 35 percent are black, although there still remain a few small, scattered pockets of ethnic whites—Jews who, bound by memories, never moved away; working-class Italians (in Hunt's Point, around Westchester Square, on City Island) who see the surrounding neighborhoods as jungles filled with beasts.

"Those people"—a common phrase among the whites of the South Bronx—is racist shorthand, a code for a murderous fear which is driving the whites to other parts of the borough, to Queens and to New Jersey.

The area—especially the 70 square blocks from 139th Street to 149th Street, between Third Avenue and the Bruckner Expressway, the neighborhood suffering most from the arson—is one of the most poverty-stricken in America. Forty percent of the population is on welfare. Thirty percent of those able to work are unemployed. The cheap tenements, built at the turn of the century, are now little more than shells. Sixty thousand of the 80,000 housing units are substandard. Fifty percent of the homes are without heat half the time.

Over 30,000 drug addicts (some say this figure is low) roam the streets. Parks that once had been filled with families out strolling are now vicious corridors, no-man's-land. Even members of the local street gangs, the cliques, do not enter them alone.

The gangs do, however, enter them in force to battle other alien gangs; and their fights are not only with fists and zip guns—in the late 1960s, GIs returning to their old neighborhoods from Indochina smuggled in submachine guns, M-1s (a semi-automatic, perfect for sniping) and M-16s (a lightweight gun, well-

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PHOTOGRAPH BY J. BARRY O'ROURKE

suited for carrying while scrambling up fire escapes and across rooftops). The blacks fight the Puerto Ricans. The blacks and Puerto Ricans fight the whites.

In the squalor of the area, hate may be the only antidote for despair. The people of the South Bronx feel abandoned by the city. Or, worse, they feel occupied by a foreign power that is exercising municipal triage.

"They don't think the area can be saved," said Carlos, a Puerto Rican from around 163rd Street who three years ago was a gang member. "They figure we're lost, so they might as well spend money somewhere else. We're the first place to get services cut. Fire Department. Sanitation Department. . . . They're just waiting for the South Bronx to destroy itself."

And fires have become the agents of destruction.

Who's torching the buildings?

There is no conspiracy, except one formed by time and circumstance. The burning of the South Bronx is the manifestation of a spontaneous harmony among many differing (and in some cases otherwise conflicting) interests, all of whom see arson as a solution to their various problems.

White middle-class landlords, who live outside the South Bronx and who may be afraid to even visit their properties, set fires to collect insurance and to burn out tenants they see as undesirable.

"Sometimes you get a warning a day or two ahead of time there'll be a fire," said George, a young man who recently moved from a building a day before it burned down. "You know you gotta go."

Junkies and scavengers set fires and, after the firemen have chopped through walls and floors to ventilate the blaze, return to rip out the exposed copper piping and anything else salvageable which they can sell.

Kids trying to fight boredom with matches set fires as cheap circuses. Demolition companies, which get paid bonuses for tearing down burned-out hazardous buildings. Families who, trapped in unlivable tenements, know that if they are burned out they have a chance to be relocated, by a welfare agency, in a city housing project and to receive cash compensations of up to $2,000 to replace lost clothing and furniture. People out for revenge.

"And firemen," said George. "The fires increased just after layoffs in the Fire Department were announced. They don't want to lose their jobs; they want to prove to the city how much they're needed."

The firemen dismiss that theory as community paranoia.

"It's the gang members," said Frank Duffy, a Jack Palance look-alike (when he smiles his cheeks bulge up, turning his eyes into evilly good-natured looking squints) who has been in the Fire Department 11 years. "Some gangs make new members set fires as part of their initiation. That accounts for a lot of the arson."

Although arsonists may have a variety of reasons for setting the fires, the results of the fires will benefit only the landlords and middle class of New York.

"Look," said Father Mario Barbel, organizer of a youth offenders program which operates out of a cellar on east 140th Street, "the South Bronx is only 15 minutes from midtown Manhattan. This could be a gold mine of a middle-class neighborhood. There's enough open land in the Bronx to start a couple of farms, even. Only trouble is it's filled with us niggers and spics. If somehow we all got burned out—well, the land lies fallow for a few years, and then you got yourself some good investment."

So far most of the landlords who have been caught and indicted own only one or two buildings; there is no evidence of a far-reaching plot hatched in the plush corporate offices of some mammoth and sinister real estate company. There doesn't have to be a plot.

Like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, people survive in this urban furnace, but the god that sustains them is the Great God Escape

The Bronx, torched for a number of reasons, *is* burning, *is* being leveled; and all the real estate speculators and developers have to do is be patient.

"It's happening," said Michael, one of Father Mario's assistants. "Take a look. Whole blocks are already leveled."

165th Street and Aldus. Wilkins Avenue between Boston Road and Jennings Street. Charlotte Street and Seabury Place. Crotona Park East. St. Anns Avenue and 142nd Street. Devastation.

There is an abandoned lot on virtually every block in the South Bronx.

These unexpected gaps give a spacious and ominous tone to the area like that of a Magritte painting.

But the surreal landscape makes an odd kind of sense. Walking up to 163rd Street, I came upon the remains of a building—nothing was left in the lot but rubble and a portion of wall the height of a man and the width of his outstretched arms. In this section of wall was a doorway with a closed door and a window with a locked gate, protecting nothing from no one, an emblem of the void.

"A good many of the fires occur in vacant buildings," said Assistant Chief Francis Cruthers, the Fire Department commander for the Bronx. "And when you get a fire in a vacant building, there's a good chance it's arson. If people don't live there, they can't set a fire accidentally. Vacant buildings breed vacant buildings, and fires breed fires. It spreads like a cancer."

As soon as one apartment is abandoned in a tenement, people start moving out of the building because they know that sooner or later a fire will be set in the empty rooms. Once that building is abandoned, people begin leaving the buildings on either side of it because of the danger of fire. When an entire block is deserted, the surrounding blocks start emptying. After a neighborhood is burned out, fires appear in the adjacent communities.

Cruthers has a system for keeping track of fires in the Bronx. On a map of the borough, each fire is indicated by a pin with a colored head. Blue pins for fires that occurred in occupied or partially occupied buildings in April or May. Green pins for June or July. Red, black, yellow. . . . Different colors for vacant buildings and for different times of day. The pins form a multicolored band, flowing north from Mott Haven up to Westgate, Morrisania and Hunt's Point.

There is a small cluster of black and red pins on 141st Street between Willis and Alexander. One red pin represents the flames that licked out of a window at 348 three days before. As firemen stormed the building that day, Gary, a teenager who lives next door, said, "They always look for bodies, but those guys who start fires, they know what they're doing."

A Mr. Frostee ice cream truck crawled up the street, its bell tolling as though bodies had been found.

A smoking wardrobe smashed through the front window of the building, followed by a card table with fire flickering along one of its wooden edges and some chairs whose burst-open plastic seat covers disclosed tufts of pink stuffing which looked like little flames.

"I was with this kid I know," said Gary, "and we were in that building over there and he set a fire in—you know, inside this old couch. He set it. And I wanted to throw it out the hole in the wall there. And the sparks came back and hit him in the eye."

A fat woman, poking her head through a second story window, called down to Gary in Spanish to get the kerosene lantern with a candle half-melted inside its glass globe. It had been dumped with other rubbish out a window of the burning building. She unrolled a ball of string, and Gary tied the lantern to the dangling end. She hoisted it up.

"I don't ever go to sleep. I have four kids. They sleep with their clothes on"

As the fire engines left, other scavengers crowded around the site of the fire. A man dragged out the folding table, and, after wiping its top down with a rag, he straightened the legs and set it up on the sidewalk. His friends rescued the smoldering chairs and pried the cushions from their plywood bases. They sat around the table. One man pulled out a set of dominoes; another retrieved the brown-bagged bottles of liquor that they had left on the nearby stoop.

The interior of the building was still warm, the plaster, in places, still too hot to touch. Smears of soot covered the walls, creating fixed shadows. There was an acrid smell of charred plastic, the sound of water slowly dripping.

Upstairs in one of the abandoned rooms, I found a woman's shoe, an umbrella, a rusted iron, some wooden hangers, a pot, malt liquor bottles, a broken jug of putrid mayonnaise. . . .

Traces of life.

In many of the abandoned buildings, people too poor to pay rent have nested. While wandering through another burned-out hulk the following day, I discovered in a ruined room, one corner of which had been swept free of garbage, a camp-stove, a cot, some pots and pans, knives, forks and spoons upright in a cleaned-out tomato soup can, flimsy aluminum pie pans for dishes and candles set in little fecal piles of wax, spaced evenly along the floor.

Through a back window, I could see drying laundry on a line strung between two other burned-out buildings and a flower pot in a window of another abandoned-looking building. Like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, people survive in this urban furnace, but the god they pray to, the god that sustains them, is the Great God Escape.

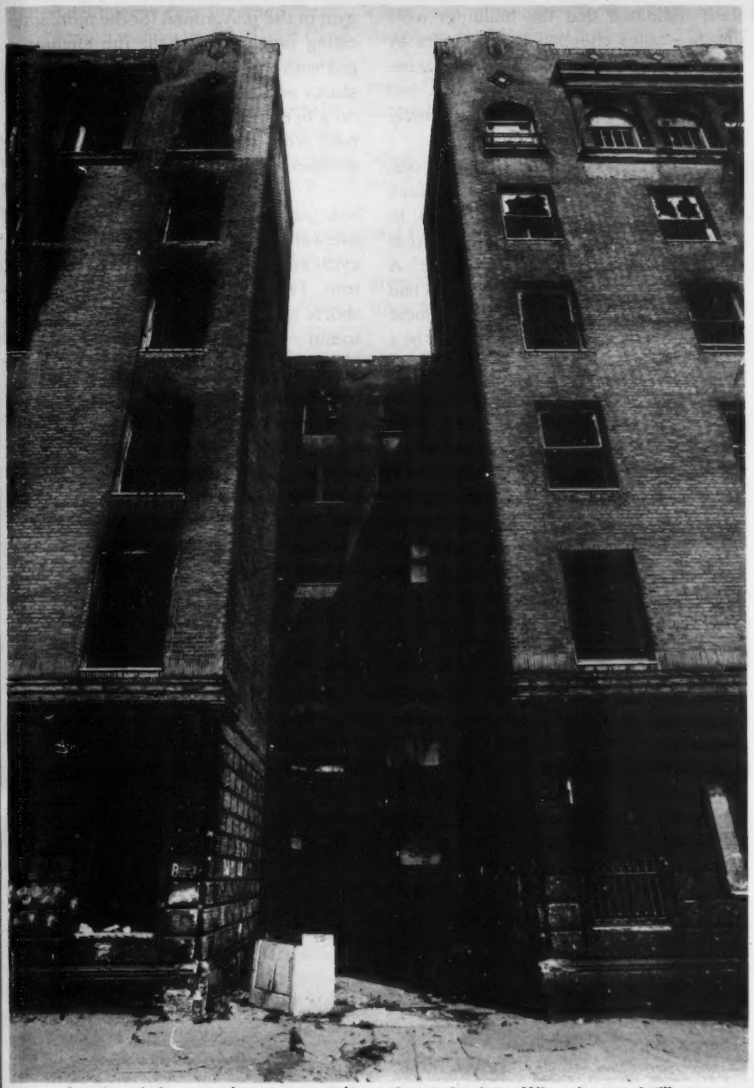
"We're moving," said Gary a few days later. "Where?" I asked.

He silently shrugged, examining the rubber band he was fiddling with. In his dream of escape, arriving in a new home was not as important as leaving his old home.

"Away," he finally said.

In front of the cellar that houses Father Mario's youth program, Reuben was sitting on top of an upended trash can. He echoed Gary.

"Got to go out to Queens today to look for a place to rent," he said.



Louie, sitting on the stoop, swigging Miller's beer, said, "You been looking for a place for three years, forever."

"How about going to New Jersey?" said Michael. "No one'll miss you."

"When I get my apartment in Queens," said Reuben, "you two'll be the first to show up. I'll stick a cot in the corner and build a stoop out back so you'll feel at home."

Every few minutes, there was the insect sound of distant fire engines.

"They're playing our song," said Reuben.

Father Mario came up out of the basement office where he had been helping one of the kids make a saint out of coat hangers for the street's Fiesta Patronal de San Pedro.

"Listen to that," he said. "All day, all night. These buildings go up in a flash. If they're occupied, you can't get the people out in time. What do you do?"

"You got to live with it," said Michael, "except you can't."

Last year, Choco had an apartment at 337 St. Anns Avenue. He was burned out. He moved to 341. He was burned out. He moved to the second floor of 345. He was burned out. He moved to the first floor of 345. He was burned out. He moved to 347.

"I was asleep," he said, "and I woke up because cars were blowing horns. I knew what'd happened."

He was burned out.

In three weeks, the entire block was gutted.

Choco moved across the street, where he built a small shack on the rubble of the buildings which had been burned and leveled earlier in the year. For a while he had a wire running from a street light into his shack for electricity, but the police made him take it down.

Inside the shack, he has a couch, chairs, carpeting. In front of the shack, he has put more carpeting, another couch and two overstuffed easy chairs. He cooks in a wood-burning stove made from a paint can. In the winter, he builds a campfire in a metal trash basket for warmth.

All day long, he sits on the couch in front of his shack, drinking sweet wine and talking to his cronies—Georgio, a small man with slicked-back hair and no teeth, Carmen, a dog named Cheerio and whoever else happens by.

When Georgio starts to tell me how he got burned out—"I was sleeping; I smelled it"—Choco takes the bottle of Wild Irish Rose wine from him. Georgio panics. His eyes go dead. He starts breathing hard and licking his lips.

"Georgio, don't be so hungry for wine," Choco says.

"That's my life," says Georgio.

"OK, OK, kill yourself." Choco looks around the rubble and finds a dirty Styrofoam cup, which he fills with wine. Georgio takes the cup and gulps. Choco drinks from the bottle.

"Before the fire, they didn't drink like that," a friend of theirs whispers.

Choco takes me inside to see how he has arranged his shack. The wall in one corner is charred.

"Yeah," Choco says. "A few weeks ago they try to burn me out of here too."

Across the street and down a block, Jennie Romano is sitting against the fence of St. Ann's cemetery, in which Lewis Morris, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, is buried.

"We lived on top of the bar," she says. "The first fire started on the fifth floor. We were on the second floor. All the water came down and ruined everything. I don't ever go to sleep. I have four kids. They sleep with their clothes on."

When the Fire Department put out a fire in Juan's building, the electrical wiring was ruined. Juan's family hasn't had electricity for months.

"Look at this block," said Juan. He is 70 years old, and he has lived in the Bronx for 19 years. "Look at it." He points at one ruined building after another. "Fire, fire, fire, fire, fire. . . . They offered me $50 to burn a building, but I said, pardon me, 'Go to hell.' "

"Who offered you the money?"

He raises his eyebrows.

"You know," he says. "You know who I mean. All there is, is fire, fire, fire, fire. . . ."

A litany.

Fire, fire, fire, fire. Talk to anyone

on the street. They have all been burned out. Or they have family who have been burned out.

"We can do nothing," he says. "It won't stop. Soon the politicians, the television, the newspapers, you'll forget about us. But the fires will keep on."

Saturday night. The fire station at 143rd Street. Chief Flanagan stands at the open door, staring into the street.

"It'll be a rough night tonight," he says. "It's hot out. Welfare checks came out yesterday. Three in the afternoon to one in the morning are the worst hours anyway. On a night like tonight, it'll be impossible."

The Arson Task Force (which was originally created last August 12th, deactivated last January 16th and reorganized and reactivated on April 3rd) has an office on the third floor of this station house. The night before, Nicholas Borg, a member of the fire commissioner's staff who developed the Task Force and who is helping to put together a new multi-agency Strike Force, which will be made up of representatives of the Fire Department, the District Attorney's office, the Housing Office and the Welfare Department, stood studying the map in the bare room.

"There are about 80 men from the Police Department's Anti-Crime Division and eight fire marshals working on the Task Force now," he said. "At any one time, we have 16 to 20 cars with 30 to 40 guys in them patrolling the area. We're having some success. Last week, eight landlords and their associates were indicted on arson charges, and we've caught a number of kids who have been setting fires. But it's still a serious problem. It's not like pyromania, where a guy has an M.O. you can predict."

Friday night had been rainy. There had been remarkably few fires. Saturday night, calls came in every few minutes. Most of them were false alarms.

Early in the evening, a call came in for a fire at 492 East 139th Street, an old brick building across the street from P.S. 40. Black smoke was billowing out of the windows on the top two floors.

"Got to be arson," said Flanagan. "You don't get smoke like that unless they use an accelerant—gasoline or kerosene."

The building—like most on the block—had a yellow square with a single slash in it spray-painted beside the door—like the mark placed on an infected home when the Black Plague swept across Europe. The square alone indicated that the buildings were structurally sound and reasonably safe for firemen to enter. One slash indicated that the buildings were unsafe—holes chopped in the floors by firemen ventilating a blaze or by arsonists leaving a booby trap, unsteady walls, bad staircases. An "X" indicated extremely hazardous conditions.

As flames flickered from the roof, people in the neighboring buildings stuck their heads out of their windows to watch. Kids and adults wandered from nearby streets to stand, talk, gaze. A woman with a portable barbecue grill had set up a table where she sold cooked meat with taco sauce and catsup. A man in a

pork-pie hat and bright double-knit slacks trundled his Italian ice cart down the street from Willis Avenue. He had a slab of ice on top of the cart that he scraped with a wallpaper stripper to make snow, which he stuffed into Dixie cups and doused with grenadine, tamarind, lime, orange, cherry, coffee and lemon syrups.

Men drinking beer, blackberry wine, gin from bottles wandered past

"Soon the politicians, the television, the newspapers, you'll forget about us. But the fires will keep on"

boys and girls who were weaving down the street on bicycles with radios blaring Latin music. One man caught an extension cord tossed out of a second story window, ran it into his car, climbed in after it, plugged in an old, rounded cream-colored Zenith radio and leaned back to enjoy the circus boiling around him.

Little kids abandoned the jungle gym in the playground for the more interesting jungle gym of the fire engines. A girl with a red ruffled halter, red stretch slacks and a bare belly danced, standing on a bench, ignored by the drunks below her, who were sitting on the bench, slumped over.

A woman carried out a beach lounger and, after setting it up on the sidewalk, stretched out in it, shielding her eyes and squinting up at the smoking roof. Three kids sat on the filthy curb in shorts and undershirts, making the siren sound—"Ahhhernnnn"—and giggling.

The firemen in their black slickers, boots and hats, oxygen masks and yellow oxygen tanks strapped to their backs, passed through this crowd like astronauts wandering on another planet among its alien inhabitants.

When the fire was over, the crowd dispersed. By the time the last fire truck had left, the block was back to normal.

A few hours later, the same building was on fire again. Flames leaped from the top floor windows, and sparks shot up through the roof, as though the building were a huge Roman candle. The fire illuminated the undersides of the clouds of black smoke pouring into the night sky.

Kids were racing up and down the stairway next door, stumbling in the dark, hiding in and springing out from abandoned and occupied apartments. The fire light, shining in the windows through the rusted ornamental grillwork of the banister, cast curlicued shadows on walls, which mingled with the spray-painted curlicues left by the graffiti artists.

On the roof, kids tore back and forth toward the fire and away from it. One of them, a 7-year-old girl named Michelle, said, "My uncle died in a fire. He was young. And another time there was a fire here, and the super came, and I helped him put it out. The smoke comes up from the building, you cover your

mouth and you can't even breathe."

"I saw a woman in a fire," said Carmen, Michelle's friend, also 7 years old. "She fell from the ceiling."

"I saw a man fall there." Michelle pointed at a fire escape on a building across the street. "A man started a fire, and another man climbed up to stop it, and he pushed him down."

"He died," said Carmen. "You can tell when they're dead. When their hearts ain't ticking, they're dead."

"After a fire," said Michelle, "people all go to church, and they say, 'God bless my husband, God bless my daughter, God bless my father. . . .' "

"My sister died in a fire," said Carmen. "She was sleeping and my mother forgot her. . . ."

"She tried to take her," said Michelle, pointing at Carmen, "and her hand got burned."

"My sister was crying and crying," said Carmen.

"I want to be a ballerina when I grow up," said Michelle. "They go up on tippy-toes like this, and twirl like this."

On the roof, in the red glare from the fire, she pirouetted, her raised arms forming a circle over her head.

Like grass growing up through concrete, life manages to break through the filth and survive in the rubble. But it's a primitive life, a refugee existence, people escaping, not from the devastations of war but from the devastations of a civilization collapsing in on itself. Imploding. Our cities are like fevered organisms devouring their own tissue to survive.

What is happening in the South Bronx is spreading, not only to surrounding areas but to other cities. While driving back from a fire this morning, I snapped on the radio just in time to hear a report on the increase in arson in Newark, New Jersey. During the past few years, Boston, Detroit, Los Angeles, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia and Minneapolis have all suffered from an increase in arson. In 1964 there were an estimated 30,900 suspicious fires in the United States. In 1973 (the most recent year for which figures have been compiled) there were about 94,300.

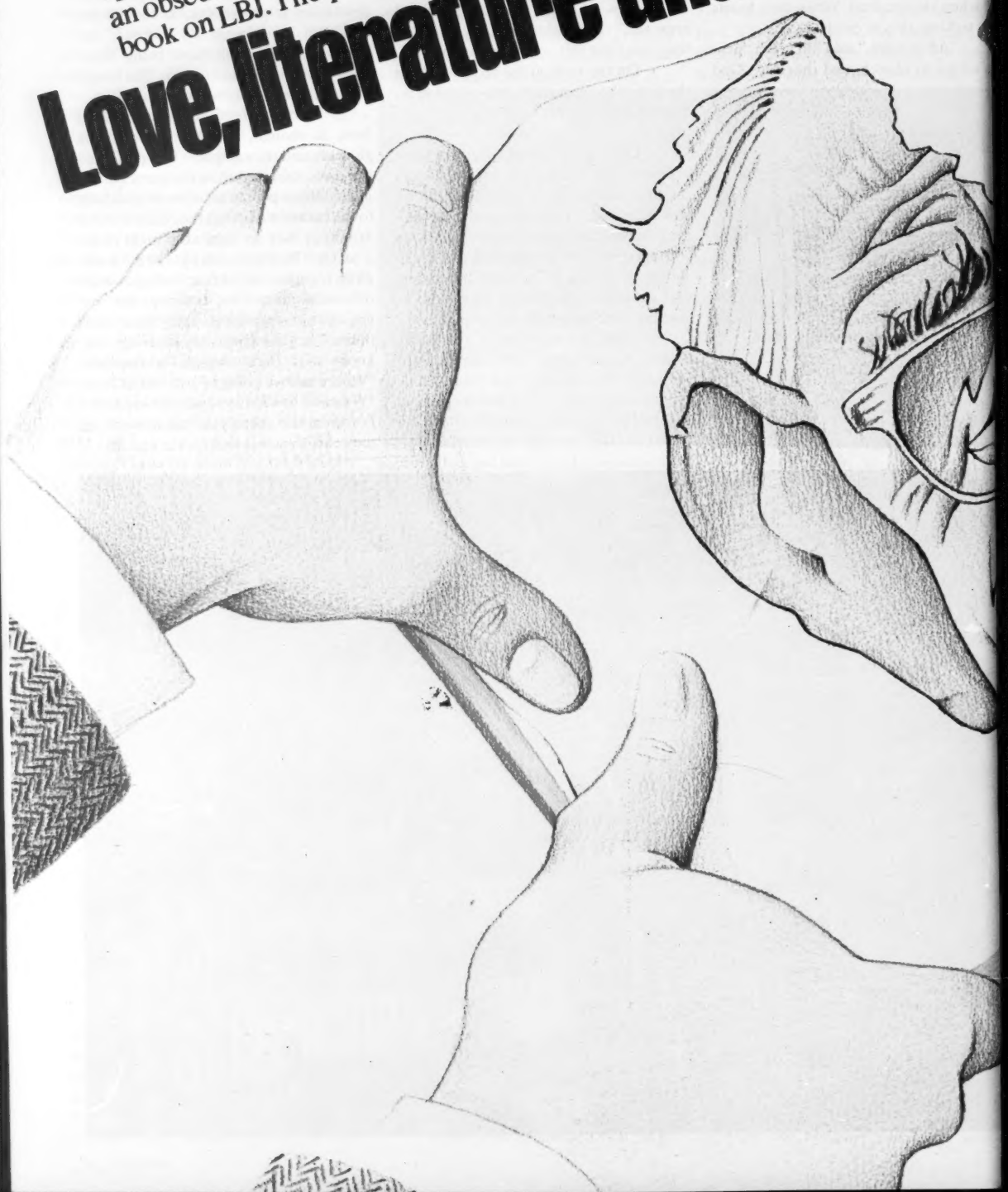
Fires do seem to breed fires. The desolation is progressive, as though the ruination we brought on Vietnam and Cambodia were somehow being internally mirrored in our country. The bombed-out cities, the displaced populations.

Some atavistic impulse draws us to fires, as though we still respond to the glow around the campfires that protected our early ancestors from the terrors of the night. When people pour out of buildings to mill around a fire, as they did on 143rd Street, as they do night after night in the South Bronx, they are huddling together out of fear, trying to ward off with desperate festivity the encroaching emptiness that surrounds them. They are temporary survivors who know that their struggle is hopeless. "Where are we going to go?" asked Juan. "We can't live in the jungle like animals." For them the apocalypse has arrived—all they can do now is wait for the end. ●

PHOTOGRAPHS BY J. BARRY O'ROURKE

In the stormiest publishing fracas of the year, Harvard professor Doris Kearns and ex-presidential speechwriter Richard Goodwin are pitted against an obscure New York editor. The prize: the ultimate insider book on LBJ. The possible cost: three damaged reputations

Love, literature and Lyndon



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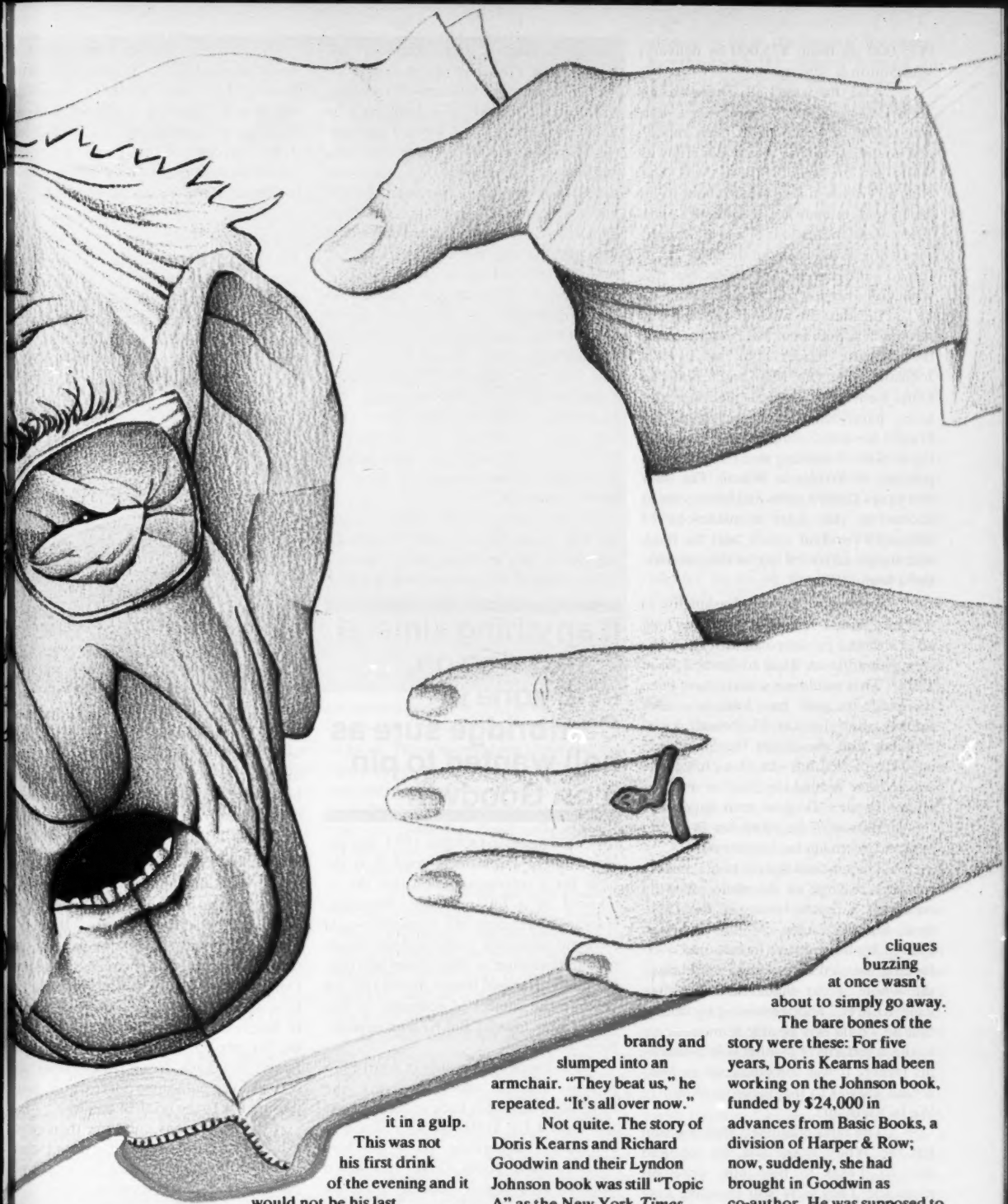

By Gerry Nadel

Richard Goodwin poured himself a slug of brandy. He scowled at it from under his dark, thatched eyebrows for a moment, then stuck his nose deep into the snifter, tipped it up and drank it in a gulp. This was not his first drink of the evening and it would not be his last.

"They beat us," he said. He produced what he evidently hoped would be a resigned, ironic smile. Doris Kearns, curled up, blonde and tiny, on a sofa across the living room of their Georgetown house, smiled back at him. He poured himself another brandy and slumped into an armchair. "They beat us," he repeated. "It's all over now."

Not quite. The story of Doris Kearns and Richard Goodwin and their Lyndon Johnson book was still "Topic A" as the New York *Times Book Review* had put it. It was a three-bagger scandal, a rare union in titillation of the academic community in Cambridge with the literary crowd in New York and the political groupies in Washington. Any story that could get all three of *those* cliques buzzing at once wasn't about to simply go away.

The bare bones of the story were these: For five years, Doris Kearns had been working on the Johnson book, funded by $24,000 in advances from Basic Books, a division of Harper & Row; now, suddenly, she had brought in Goodwin as co-author. He was supposed to add to the book his perspectives as a former speechwriter for John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson. Together they had planned a bigger book. This April, Kearns broke her contract with Basic Books and signed for a $150,000 advance

($75,000 up front, $75,000 by delivery) with Simon & Schuster.

And that wasn't all. There was an editor, Basic Books' Erwin Glikes, who was telling reporters "I've been raped" and sounding as if he meant it literally as well as literarily. There was the Kearns/Goodwin love affair (about to be sanctioned in marriage at summer's end). There were intimations of a love triangle, funky doings between the sheets in the effort to get between hard covers. No, this wasn't all over now, not by a long shot.

Besides, the work in question was nothing less than what had been touted as the ultimate insider book on Lyndon Johnson. The Old Man had even told Doris Kearns his *dreams*—nightmares of being paralyzed in the cockpit of Air Force One with a herd of cattle stampeding at him, of standing trembling before a portrait of Woodrow Wilson. For over five years Doris Kearns had been granted access to the inner convolutions of Johnson's cerebral cortex, and the book was supposed to tell the world just what she'd found there.

Kearns had gone to Washington as a White House fellow in 1967, not long after she had published an article in *The New Republic* on "How to Dump LBJ in 1968." That would not seem to have been designed to gain her Johnson's confidence, but she was 25, beautiful and brilliant, and she caught the President's eye. He picked her out of a crowd and whirled her around the floor at a White House dance: "Do your men dance like this at Harvard?" he asked her as he slid his hand down her back to her waist.

They would spend hours talking together, Kearns all the while piling up notes for a psycho-history of the President. She eventually saw him as a man glutted by his mother's "emotional overfeeding that led him to grow up thinking the whole world should accommodate itself to him," and tormented by doubts that he would ever be able to measure up to the standards of manliness imposed by his father. It was something of an Eriksonian answer to the question: Why Are We In Vietnam?

The talks continued after Johnson left the White House and she followed him to Texas to help him write his memoirs. They were still spending long hours together right up until Johnson's death in January 1973.

There were those, of course, who wondered if Kearns and Johnson might have been doing something more than merely talking. Haynes Johnson of the Washington *Post*, one of the first to reveal the strange LBJ/Kearns relationship, thinks not: "She says they didn't have an affair, and I accept her word. I do know that Johnson was the kind of man who was attracted to young people, who wanted to win everybody to his point of view, and she started out against him. So, I can believe, without seeming too naive, that it was just the way she said it was. . . but how the hell can I say for sure?"

By 1970 Kearns was back at Harvard, teaching in the Government Department, and publishers were bidding for her book. Little, Brown saw her outline and made an offer. Then she met Basic Books' Erwin Glikes at a party, and he made an offer too. Little, Brown's bid was better, but Kearns says she "wanted to do something more than just a poli-sci book and Glikes seemed to be, well, more. . . *literary*."

For the next five years, Kearns worked on her book. It was obviously going slowly. But she managed to present a rough draft of the manuscript to her Harvard colleagues in October 1974, and the Government Department used it as the basis for a recommendation that she be tenured as a full professor. Normally, Harvard's president and overseers would have automatically confirmed the tenure recommendation at their June meeting. Normally, Harvard tenure matters do not become the subject of editorials in *The Wall Street Journal*. But Kearns' appointment would.

If anything sinister was going on, everyone in Cambridge sure as hell wanted to pin it on Goodwin

It happened because in April 1975 Kearns sent a check covering the $24,000 in advances back to Basic Books and signed for $150,000 with Simon & Schuster. According to *Publishers Weekly*, Basic Books' Glikes first heard from Kearns' agent, Sterling Lord, on April 7, and was told Doris couldn't finish the book, that she was now working with Richard Goodwin on a new and different book on the presidency. *PW* quotes Glikes as saying he was told there were about 50 pages of a new manuscript. He was asked to look at them and make a new bid. He refused, saying he already had a book under contract.

Everyone got together about a week later—Glikes, Kearns, Goodwin, Sterling Lord and Winthrop Knowlton and Brooks Thomas of Harper & Row, Basic's parent company. The New York *Times* account of that meeting quotes Glikes as saying Goodwin "came on like the Bay of Pigs." Nothing got settled.

On April 24, two days after Kearns sent Basic Books her check for $24,000, it was sent back to her with a letter from Harper & Row's Win Knowlton telling her it wasn't cricket for her to break her contract. But, that same day, she signed the $150,000 deal with Simon & Schuster. A month later, Basic Books sued for breach of contract.

Enter *The Wall Street Journal*, which strangely brushed aside the matter of the broken contract, which it might have been expected to view as a body blow to capitalism. Instead, the financial chronicle inserted itself into a scholarly debate: With Goodwin now slated to co-author with Kearns an entirely new book, he would "no doubt turn a $24,000 piece of scholarship" submitted to the Government Department of Harvard the previous October "into a $150,000 polemic." Under the circumstances, said the editorial, Harvard "has no way to judge the scholarly quality of the forthcoming manuscript, which in any event will not be Miss Kearns' individual work. It only knows that the original manuscript was competent scholarship, but will America's leading university choose to grant lifetime tenure on the basis of scholarship the author [now] refuses to publish?"

Perhaps flattered by the *Journal*'s blithe designation of Harvard as "America's leading university," the Government Department and the dean of the faculty scheduled a meeting to review Doris Kearns' tenure. It was beginning to look as if she was in deep trouble. "Doris H. Kearns *seemed* to have everything going for her. . ." [emphasis added] began Israel Shenker's New York *Times* account of the publishing controversy, past-tensing her to the brink of doom.

The obvious question, then, was: Why? Why did she do it? She didn't seem to have anything to gain by switching publishers. . . and everything to lose. The $24,000 from Basic Books versus the $150,000 from Simon & Schuster would seem to have been an illusory incentive, since the book appeared destined for the best-seller list and would have earned far more than either advance in any case (Glikes at Basic Books was already lining up book club and serialization deals when Doris broke the contract).

Gerry Nadel is Boston bureau chief of Women's Wear Daily *and has written for* Esquire, TV Guide *and* Boston.

Doris Kearns in Cambridge: LBJ had even told her his dreams.

The Times *Book Review* hinted at a reason: "The relationship of Miss Kearns and Mr. Goodwin is portrayed in terms of 'Trilby' as written by Edna Ferber—Pygmalion and Galatea have also been evoked."

Doris Kearns as Trilby, Dick Goodwin as Svengali. Exactly—because if anything sinister was going on, everyone in Cambridge, at least, sure as hell wanted to pin it on Goodwin. In Cambridge "practically everyone loves Doris Kearns," as one Harvard hanger-on puts it, and "nobody has a decent word to say about Richard Goodwin."

"He's a prick, tough and cool," says a writer close to Ted Kennedy and Goodwin. "I've heard Kennedy talking about what a shit Goodwin is, but then someone asked him, 'If you were running for president, would you hire him?' And Kennedy said, 'Of course. In a minute!' Nobody can stand him, but everybody is sort of bewitched by him, by his talent. He has the ability to write speeches that move him into the heart and mind of whomever he's writing them for."

"Dick talked her into it," someone who was once a friend of both of them declares. "Dick Goodwin *is* a Svengali. He has this power over people. He's done it to us. There's something about him that makes you say, 'Yes, Dick. . . yes, Dick.' I remember, Doris would tell us, 'I really love Dick, and I really love his little boy, but one thing I'm afraid of is that he'll devour me, just swallow me up.' Well, now he's done it."

There was even outright mourning among Cambridge feminists. Someone who is still Kearns' friend admits, "All the young women in our peer group are very distressed about this. It looks like just another case of a woman throwing her life away for a man."

Dick talked her into it. It became the Cambridge cocktail party line. The theory seemed to have logic, the reasoning being that Doris switched publishers to get big money right away in order to help Goodwin pay his debts; thus they could marry with their financial house in order. They did plan to wed in August, and Goodwin did have substantial debts—they were left over from his wife's last illness.

Sandy Goodwin had been mentally ill, off and on, for years. When Goodwin met Kearns at Harvard's Institute of Politics in September 1973 his wife had begun her final stay in a genteel asylum for the wealthy sick. She had already been in the hospital for several months—with the charges running upwards of $60 a day. In December Mrs. Goodwin was released on a holiday season furlough. Apparently, no one checked whether there would be anyone to meet her at her Cambridge home; there was no one there when she arrived. She locked herself into the house, took an overdose of sleeping pills and died. The house was empty because Goodwin, who had not been told his wife would be released, was vacationing in Martinique with Doris Kearns.

"The hospital bill was huge," says someone at Harvard, "and he still hasn't paid it off. This advance from Simon & Schuster would clear the slate for Doris and Dick before they get married."

That was the theory—it was the money. The only problem with the theory was that it was at odds with the story Doris and Dick were telling. "It was not done for the money," said Goodwin, flat out, in the New York *Times*, while Kearns declared, "It has become impossible for us to do the work with Basic Books."

Erwin Glikes of Basic Books was talking too. He told of his firm's half dozen National Book Award nominations and two actual winners out of 50 volumes released this year. He called his work with Doris Kearns "the closest editorial relationship I've ever had with an author," and told of lunches on a bench at The Cloisters together and trips to Washington to work over the kitchen table at Goodwin's Georgetown home.

He even claimed he'd given Kearns' book its basic shape: "When I saw her outline in 1970," he told me, recently, "she was going to do a real political science book about the presidency. But when I heard her talking about LBJ, it became very clear to me there was an extraordinary book to be written paralleling Johnson's life and the development of America in the 20th century. I showed this to her. That's the job of an editor, you know."

The book had gone so slowly, he said, because "we were working through all of Doris' relationships with men. She'd tell me all about them just like I would tell her about my ups and downs. We were friends, see? We'd talk about our relationships, have coffee over them, so to speak."

The deadline for submitting her manuscript to the Harvard tenure committee was coming up in the fall of 1974. "She asked me for an additional advance of $4,000 to rent a house in Martha's Vineyard to stay all summer and work. At

the end of the summer, I came up to edit it. She sent a draft of the manuscript to the committee and then we continued on the book. In December she moved down to Washington. I'd go down there every Thursday and Friday and work with her at Goodwin's house. My deadline to get the book into our fall catalogue was February 17. On February 18 she called—she said she couldn't make the deadline. After that, there was just this long silence. . . until April 7, when I got that phone call from her agent, Sterling Lord, telling me she wanted to do this new book with Goodwin."

A few days after Glikes told me his version of the story, Kearns was telling hers, curled up on the sofa, watching Goodwin sip his brandy and cupping a mug of coffee between her hands. As she told it, there appeared to be parts of the story which Glikes had left out: For instance, the $4,000 he had given her to rent the cottage on Martha's Vineyard turned out to be only the last installment on the $20,000 advance originally agreed to. An additional payment, bringing the total to $24,000 in advances, came in January. What Glikes failed to mention was that the additional money was used to pay Goodwin to help Kearns full time with the book for a month.

Kearns says it was help she needed badly: "Erwin had lost his critical eye. He would simply tell me how *good* the work was. Once before, I'd had to hire a free-lance writer—Michael Rothschild—to provide a more critical perspective. I never told Erwin about him. I didn't want to hurt his feelings." Kearns paid Rothschild $8,000. Later, when her tenure came under review, the extent of Rothschild's help became a major issue.

"I had a sense of foreboding from the time Dick and I started working together on the book," Doris recalled. "Erwin had developed a very strong identification with the book. Also, somehow he had perceived that his editorial relationship with me would produce a permanent friendship. He was very sentimental. He would talk about knowing me until the end of time. It was very strange."

She shook her head and sipped her coffee. "Gradually, we began to talk more and more about our lives. One day, I remember, he was really upset about something, and I said, 'Okay, let's talk about this until lunch.' But even after lunch, he persisted. He said, 'Our friendship has to take precedence.' We'd never get any work done."

When she asked Glikes for the additional $4,000 to pay Goodwin, she says, he was very hostile: "He made it very hard for me. He treated me almost like a child. He said, 'You should budget better.' He also warned me that he thought Dick's participation would water down the book. It was a dumb thing to say considering I was planning to marry this man. But he had his opinions on that, too. When Dick wasn't in the room, he'd say, 'You sure you know what you're doing?' "

Kearns and Goodwin began working together in January: "What we were producing was the work I had always wanted to write. It wasn't that Dick was writing it so much as he was pulling things out of me. Lyndon Johnson is such an extraordinary character for talking about what happened to America in the 20th century, but I'd left that larger connection undone."

She paused. "I know Erwin thinks

Says Glikes: Doris Kearns "has told me too much about herself for me ever to fall in love with her. That was the greatest immunization"

he inspired that parallel. He really believes it. That's part of his identification with the book. He would always talk about LBJ as a symbol of America. But I have a 50-page outline I showed Little, Brown before I ever met him, and all those themes are in there. The important thing, no matter what Erwin believes, is that those themes didn't get into the book until Dick started pulling them out of me."

With 170 pages of a new approach to the work completed, Doris says the idea gradually came to her that Goodwin might co-author the book: "I started thinking of the material he had from his own days in the White House, the Great Society, civil rights, things I arrived too late to see." Together, they calculated it would take ten months to finish the book. "We had to have money to live on for that next year." But she says she was afraid to approach Glikes directly because of his hostility toward Dick. So she asked her agent, Sterling Lord, to call and try to renegotiate for an expanded work including Goodwin's input and a higher advance payment "to support us while we worked."

"Sterling told me he was stunned by Erwin's response. Erwin didn't want to see our new manuscript. He just said he was sure it would be worse, and if we wanted to take the manuscript elsewhere, he'd sue. Up till then, we hadn't said a word about going anywhere else.

"I called him the next day. He was very solicitous. He said, 'I'm so glad we can talk again.' But the first thing he asked me about was my tenure. Immediately, he said he would have to call my department chairman—he said he didn't want his reputation hurt with his other Harvard authors. I said, 'Harvard is *my* business!' I knew he was threatening me, and, as it turned out, Win Knowlton of Harper & Row actually did call my department."

The following week came the "Bay of Pigs" meeting: "It wasn't very pleasant." A week later, Doris sent Glikes her check for $24,000. When he didn't call or send a telegram rejecting it, she and Goodwin signed a new contract at Simon & Schuster, "under the presumption that the original deal was broken."

If Kearns' story is to be credited, the history of her relationship with Glikes is a series of overreactions—Glikes overreacting in his identification with the book to the point of convincing himself that he shaped its basic theme, Glikes overreacting to Doris and demanding that their friendship take precedence over their professional relationship, Glikes overreacting to Goodwin much like a jealous lover.

If Kearns' version of the story is true, the overreactions were what led step by step to the break: Glikes' insistence on friendship over editing driving her first to Rothschild, then to Goodwin for help; Glikes' hostility to Goodwin leading to the ultimate rupture.

Kearns will not confirm for the record whether Glikes ever pressured her for something more than friendship, but she won't deny it either. Like her relationship with Lyndon Johnson, its true extent remains a mystery. Kearns ascribes it all to "the incapacity on people's parts to believe a woman's role with a man could be purely professional."

For his part, Glikes denies any such speculation heatedly: "My whole sense of who I am does not include Doris Kearns. She's Harvard and I'm Columbia. She's for somebody else. I admit, I've been tempted, but she's part of something that has to do with Cambridge and Washington and a certain kind of speed life. When she'd talk to me, I could be sympathetic but I would be amazed by the carelessness, casualness and intensity of the people playing for these stakes. I would have to be a very unserious and out-of-control person to have endangered my work and my life by caring that much

for a woman. I could see it happening to me, but I couldn't see it happening to me with Doris Kearns. She's told me too much about herself for me ever to fall in love with her. That was the greatest immunization.

"But, whatever happens now, I lose. There's no way I can come out clean on this. I've been raped. They beat me."

It was strange. Richard Goodwin had used almost those exact words, staring down into his brandy, slumped in his armchair. It was the day on which he had released his letter to Richard Snyder, the president of Simon & Schuster.

The letter was the last weird twist in this story. "Dear Dick," Goodwin had written, "I am writing to confirm my decision to withdraw from the book."

Goodwin was quitting. He was pulling out of the project. It was very strange: Goodwin has little experience with defeat, and certainly none with surrender. He was, after all, the man who joined the McCarthy campaign in New Hampshire in 1968 and found Seymour Hersh running the candidate's press office all by himself: "You, me and two typewriters are going to overthrow the government," he told Hersh, and by April 1, when Lyndon Johnson quit, they had done it. Now you could picture him telling Doris Kearns, "You, me and two typewriters are going to produce the greatest and most significant book ever written on an American president" (because that, indeed, was the way he described it in his letter to Snyder, apologizing for "the necessary arrogance on which writers are nourished"). But this time he was quitting.

It was hard to find the reason for his surrender. It would not seem to make any difference in the court battle with Glikes—in fact, it might weaken the case: Before, they might have argued that the two of them were producing an entirely new book together, but now Doris was back to writing alone a work much as originally conceived.

Also, there was no question any longer of Dick's participation jeopardizing her Harvard tenure. The Government Department review had reaffirmed her appointment—Michael Rothschild's freelance contributions were not deemed significant in terms of the manuscript's scholarship.

So why was Goodwin quitting? His only explanation, as contained in the letter, was that he was withdrawing because of the "now public innuendo that Doris is incapable of doing her own work without my help. . . . There is the further implication. . . that she is a vulnerable, infatuated female who has been manipulated by some malignantly dominating man."

There was something about it that didn't make sense. If by "her own work," Goodwin meant the manuscript submitted to Harvard, the fact of her tenure would be proof enough of its worth. As to the "further implication," those charges had already been made, and there would be no erasing the events that, rightly or wrongly, led to them.

But Goodwin was convinced he must withdraw—the project, he wrote, was not "worth. . . the private anguish I have seen and shared with her over the past few weeks. . . . Neither my work nor its rewards has the slightest significance beside this harm to a woman I love.

"So, Dick, the book is over. Doris will continue with her own work by herself. . . . I suppose that the remaining issues can be settled in some form of compromise between publishers. If Harper & Row/Basic Books still will not settle. . . she can. . . publish it with one of the nonprofit institutions with whom she has already had discussions.

"Please return the manuscript when you get a chance. It might be of some marginal interest to future literary historians." ●

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Movies

The misfortune of Mike Nichols: notes on the making of a bad film

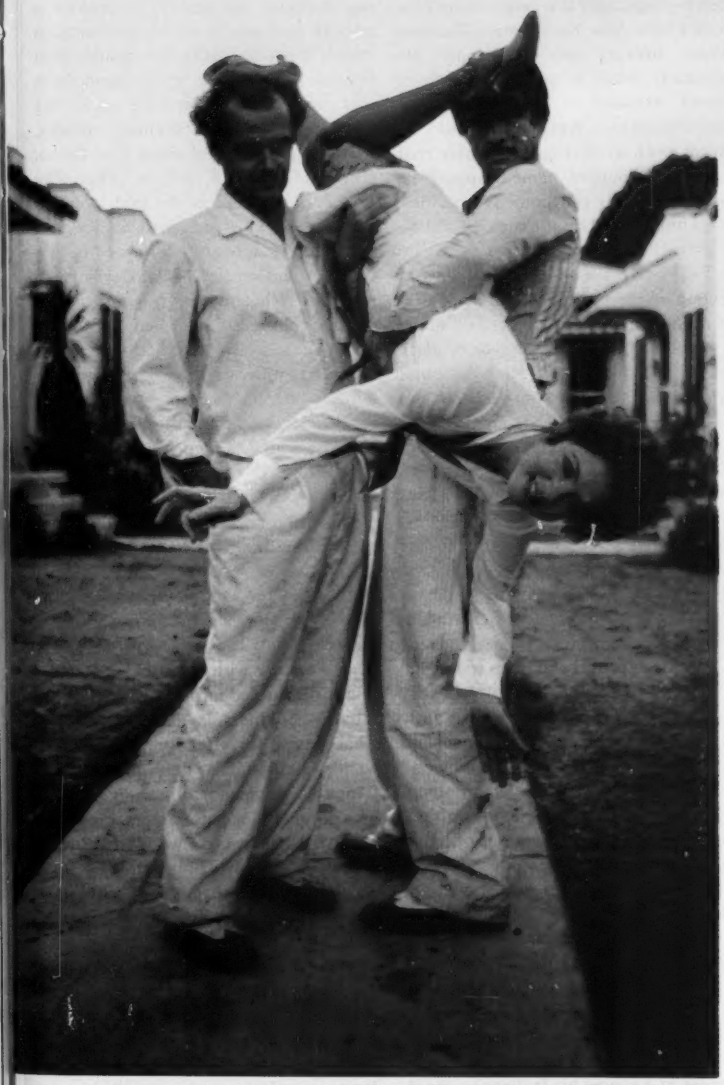
By Frank Rich

When I was in California last summer, hanging around the old Selznick studio in Culver City where Mike Nichols was making **The Fortune,** I heard the word "wonderful" more times in ten days than I had heard it in my entire life. Everything was "wonderful," and some things were "very wonderful" or even "extremely wonderful." When Nichols finished a take, he was more likely than not to deem it "wonderful"; if people had been to a party the night before, that party was "wonderful"; the rushes screened each morning were invariably "wonderful." People could be wonderful, too—especially so in the case of *The Fortune*'s leading lady, 31-year-old Stockard Channing, whose big break this picture was; when Channing finished her work for the day and went back to her dressing room to change, whispers of "She's very wonderful" or "Isn't she very wonderful?" usually filled the sound stage in her wake. Things were so wonderful out in Culver City last August that it never would have occurred to me or anyone else that all the wonderfulness might eventually produce a movie like *The Fortune. The Fortune*, I think, is pretty terrible—and it just goes to show that in California's flattering sunshine even disaster can have an alluring face.

I had gone to Hollywood because I wanted to watch a continuous stretch of work on a big American film—and *The Fortune* fit most of my definitions of big. In addition to the director, the production involved a full array of film-industry honchos: stars Warren Beatty and Jack Nicholson, screenwriter Carole Eastman *(Five Easy Pieces),* cinematographer John Alonzo *(Chinatown)* and art director Richard Sylbert (*Chinatown, Shampoo* and all of Nichols' films); even Channing was not unknown to me, for I had seen and enjoyed her stage performances when she was appearing with local theatrical groups in my college town of Boston. While Nichols notoriously fends off visitors to his sets (and even makes a point of discouraging still photographers from taking his picture), he agreed to let me watch him make *The Fortune;* we had never met each other, and I assume he extended the invitation in part because, as a critic, I have been a fairly consistent supporter of his work. I was glad to go, because the making of *The Fortune* looked to be an impressive exercise in Hollywood professionalism—as indeed it was. But professionalism is not necessarily the same process as artistic creation, and I came back from California with some unresolved, even troubling, impressions of the way *The Fortune* was put together. When, last month, I saw the finished film, and saw it with an audience who would never know how wonderful it had once promised to be, those jumbled impressions began to assume a somewhat coherent shape—as things tend to do when one has the privilege of hindsight.

The movie's principal set, a mangy old-time L.A. bungalow court, had been built at great expense on "40 Acres," the back lot of the studio, and one day Sylbert, who had designed it, took me on a tour of his handiwork. Sylbert is an engaging and literate man in his 40s who has since gone on to become a production executive at Paramount; after explaining why he had made his various aesthetic choices in determining the look of *The Fortune,* he explained his succinct view of moviemaking in general. "Most movies have the good things and the bad things built into them," he said. "The point is to make the good things overshadow the bad so that people won't notice." Although the art director didn't say so, it was fairly clear then (and is, of course, abundantly clear now) that the bad thing built into *The Fortune* was its script—a script that Eastman had written for the male stars and which (according to Nichols) she had in part conceived as a good-natured "attack" on them. That script is a comedy—set in the '20s and decked out in period slang—about two low-life heels, Nicky (Beatty) and Oscar (Nicholson), who romance a Long Island heiress to a sanitary napkin fortune, Freddie (Channing), so that they can bring her to California and get their hands on her money. (Freddie is in love with the already married Nicky, and so must marry Oscar to circumvent the Mann Act—a complicated plot point that the script must expend too much energy to establish.) While Eastman's screenplay sometimes trades in the madcap conventions of the old Three Stooges and Laurel and Hardy comedies (Beatty is the dashing, self-absorbed straight man; Nicholson the frizzy-haired, bumbling idiot), there's no denying that the story hangs largely on the comic attempts of the two heroes to murder the innocent and likable heroine; even the film's curious happy ending, which reunites the three protagonists in domestic near-bliss, doesn't effectively negate the nastiness of what has come before. *The Fortune,* like other Nichols films (*Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?, The Graduate, Carnal Knowledge*) that have focused on largely heartless characters, can only work if leavened by humor or, if possible, by charm. Unfortunately, the movie is not, except on scattered occasions, funny: Nichols, who rightly prides himself on going for "the element of truth rather than the gag," ends up leaning all too heavily on gags in this film (car collisions, collapsing deck chairs, food fights). And, except for brief flashes in Channing's ambivalent performance (she comes across as an uneasy mixture of Margaret Dumont and Betty Boop), *The Fortune* isn't particularly charming, either. As a result, the film's decidedly humorless premise overwhelms and finally wipes out its aspirations to farce—and much of the time *The Fortune* is cold, dead and even a little ugly.

Eastman, an ex-actress who writes her scripts under the pseudonym of Adrien Joyce, was an aloof figure around the set. Her eyes hidden behind tinted glasses, she strolled stealthily about, occasionally speaking in brittle-toned whispers to her principal confidants, Nicholson and Channing. (The only time I heard her raise her voice was when, one day at lunch, she suddenly launched into an unsolicited tirade against critic Pauline Kael—who, I later learned, had mercilessly and astutely slammed Eastman's last script, for



Nicholson, Channing and Beatty in a publicity photo session at "40 Acres": "The moments when you're rolling are the ones that really count."

Puzzle of a Downfall Child, five years ago.) Since Eastman prefers not to speak to reporters, it was left to others to explain what her screenplay really meant. "In a sense," Channing told me, "these people all kind of belong together—they're married to each other. They're all they have, and Freddie just doesn't want to leave the two men; like people in a real marriage, she'll tolerate even physical violence. When they stay together at the end, they may try to kill her again, but she'll keep bouncing back. It's the genre of the Marx brothers, but not as surreal. It's more multidimensional than that, more like the Italian comedies than American." Did Eastman intend *The Fortune* as a statement about sexism? "Well," Channing continued, "it is partially a story about shifting roles. The mousebed [the film's colloquial term for sanitary napkin] is a symbol of what men don't know about women, and it parallels the situation in the movie. If the boys had gone along with Freddie, she'd have given them anything, but instead they try to wrest it away from her. It's about role-playing between men and women. . . . The symbolism is always there. It's important that the fortune is from Freddie's mother, from the maternal side—there's a double meaning in that, because she has the burden of the fortune and the burden of the menstrual cycle, too. Mike said in rehearsal that it's like Freddie is the fortune and they miss it completely. She's like the goose laying the golden eggs, and they miss it. It's like raping Mother Earth—you can go on and on like that. . . ."

Beatty, who had just finished producing and acting in *Shampoo* and who seemed to regard the making of *The Fortune* as something of a lark ("This picture has been no work for me at all " is the way he put it), took a more down-to-earth view of Eastman's screenplay: "It's a lot of fun, really—a silly story about silly idiots. The men want this money and they want to kill her. They don't kill her and they don't really want to." In any case, the script, which reportedly ran four hours in its original draft, ultimately sustained only a 95-minute film; whatever the screenwriter's original intentions, all that remains of her contribution to the film are those gags, the story, the viciousness of the male characters and a related butch-homosexual subtext that surfaces most startlingly when Freddie gives a gratuitous speech about how she feels like "a real individual" when dressed in men's clothes and then, so dressed, makes love to one of the fellas.

Not in the habit of writing screenplays himself, Nichols has always been to some extent a prisoner of his material—though he sees his situation as being otherwise. "I don't know why I don't [write scripts]," he said. "I like the idea of two viewpoints pulling against each other. Or if not a pulling, then an overlay of one person's insight into something over another's; for me, it's parallax, it gives more of a 3-D effect. You get the viewpoint not of one eye, but of two eyes or four eyes. . . ." Maybe so, but in the instance of *The Fortune,* Eastman's and Nichols' points of view don't pull against or elucidate each other; instead, Eastman supports a dim view of human nature consistent with that of Nichols' other films—and doesn't bother to transmogrify the sourness into entertainment. Only one scene I saw being shot—one in which Nicholson's Oscar, a bundle of hysteria and sweat, unnecessarily confesses a murder plot to cops who are visiting him on another matter—was laughing-

out-loud funny, and, coincidentally enough, the scene is also the funniest in the finished movie. Other scenes filmed that week seemed a bit lifeless—as Nichols himself was well aware. "You're seeing a running down of energy," he told me by way of explanation. "People are just tired, and it usually happens toward the end. You can't keep laughing and scratching and having a good time; you realize that the moments when you're rolling are the ones that really count and you work to preserve those moments." Ultimately, Nichols was less successful at preserving those moments than he might have hoped; the preponderance of two of the lengthier scenes shot while I was there—a seduction scene between Freddie and a barber who picks her up, a police-station confession by Oscar—found their way to the cutting room floor.

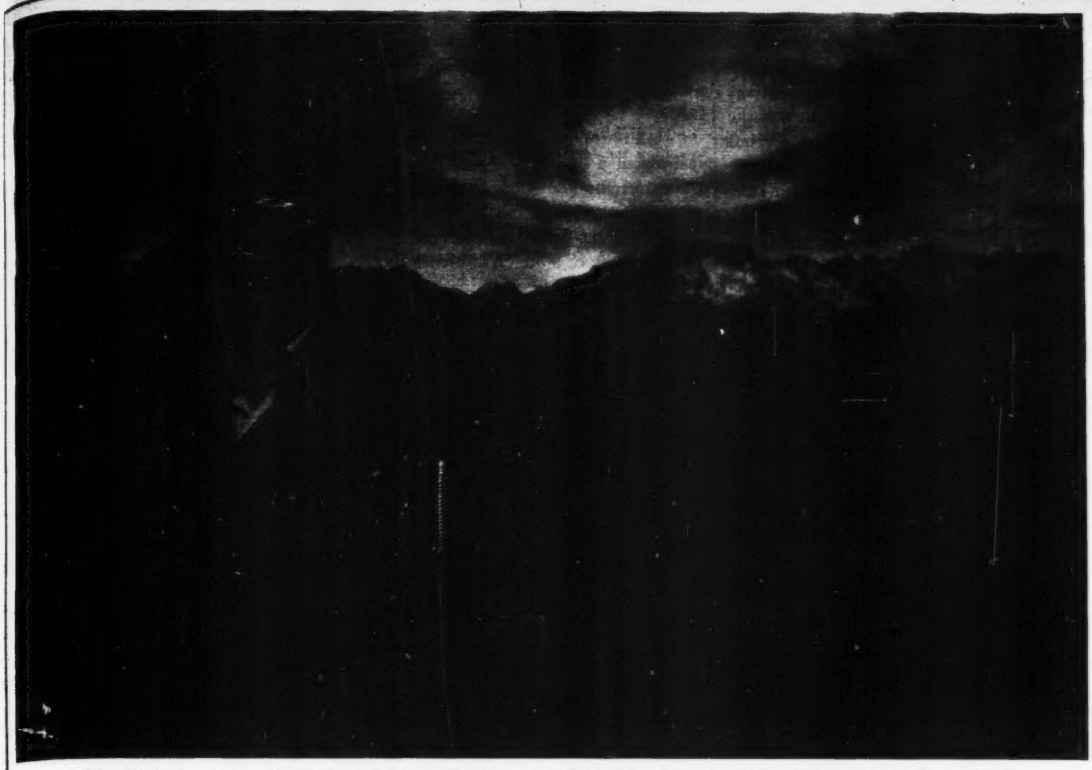
There was palpable tension on the set of *The Fortune,* but that tension did not derive, as one might think, from a sinking sense on the part of the company that the movie was going astray. Rather the tension came from Nichols and the manner in which he works—but it took me a while to figure that out. When, during the first afternoon of my stay, assistant director Peter Bogart told me that *The Fortune* was "the most emotionally taxing . . . the hardest . . . the most demanding" movie he'd ever worked on, I had no idea what he was talking about. My first impressions of the man who ran the show were just as benign as I had expected them to be: Nichols seemed very much the informal, witty and unfailingly intelligent person that his comic voice had always projected. He is a little paunchier at 44 than he had been on the record jackets of the albums he made with Elaine May, but he is still low-key and articulate. He hasn't gone Hollywood, proverbially or literally; except when he must work in the movie capital, he spends his time either in an apartment on Central Park West or on a farm in Connecticut (where he devotes a lot of energy to raising horses). When Nichols puttered around the set, checking details or conferring with Sylbert or Executive Producer Hank Moonjean or the members of his crew, he usually maintained a consistent, even-keel tone. If there was a lull in the filmmaking process, as lights were shifted or camera setups were changed, Beatty and Nicholson would retreat to their bungalows, but Nichols would hold down the fort, chatting with those around him about such favorite topics as the logistical nightmares of making *Catch-22,* Hitchcock films and, inevitably, Elaine May. He was not averse to trading gossip—especially if it centered on New York City's *New York Review*-Random House literary axis—and only occasionally, when he talked glowingly of parties attended by Bianca Jagger or Michelangelo Antonioni, did his banter ever so fleetingly resemble that of the compulsive name-droppers he parodied in his old comedy routines, when he was still on the outside and on his way up.

Nearly always Nichols' face was fixed in an inscrutable, bright-eyed grin, his mouth slightly curled up to one side; in profile, he looked not unlike *Peanuts'* Charlie Brown. It is Nichols' quiet style, his willingness to sit and talk and his eager desire to laugh (sometimes until he cried) that actors tend to cite when they talk about working with him. "He's fun—very thorough, but without any kind of a power trip," Channing explained. "He's totally efficient, always there to discuss the tiniest little things, any actor's question—no matter how small. . . . You always feel his control; he's a wonderful audience, and he wants to give his approval and loves to laugh." According to Beatty, "Nichols is a very good audience . . . . One is constantly aware of a very receptive audience, and that's what a director is in movies." "Sometimes you want to let off steam with a minor tantrum," Nicholson said, "and, of course, it can get out of hand. But with Mike it never does. He disregards the small stuff and stays right with the work."

What Nichols' stars say is true, but so is that tension that Peter Bogart was getting at, and which I gradually came to understand. Nichols works almost too hard at maintaining a cool and breezy front, and, after a while, his success at keeping his feelings in check can become peculiarly rattling. Nichols bends over backwards to keep any displays of personal feeling out of his working life, and, in the end, he is so good at making that separation that to an outside observer such strict professionalism becomes a fetish in its own right. There were frequent instances during the time I was around *The Fortune* when technical snafus ruined takes or scenes just refused to come alive, and Nichols always kept his feelings in tight control. His reponse to calamity was always to drift off into an edgy silence, light another cigarette and stare intently at the bustling technicians around him; such behavior seemed more unnatural than a shouting match or a temper tantrum would have under the circumstances. Nichols' working manner, his ability to project a smooth and usually affable presence no matter what he was feeling inside, soon became inseparable in my mind from that tension that informs his work. The frothy surfaces of Nichols' movies, whether a successful effort like *Carnal Knowledge* or a failure like *The Fortune,* may be, in the end, window dressing—a gloss designed to dodge a forthright expression of the misanthropic sentiments that underlie such projects. What makes *The Fortune* so unpalatable is that, when the jokes aren't there, this contradiction between style and content resolves itself: we suddenly find ourselves face to face with that darkness at the bottom of the filmmaker's soul. *The Fortune*'s hard substance has conviction, but its facile exterior does not.

"Fellini makes you realize what great filmmaking is," Nichols said to me one time. "He radiates waves of love from every inch of his body. He makes you want to sit in his lap." Because Nichols wants that affection, he packs *The Fortune* with slapstick—as if we might be cajoled into believing that the movie's coldness is actually warmth. That desire for affection may also be what's behind his determinedly unflappable demeanor, his willingness to be a good audience for actors, his looseness with the word "wonderful." The trouble is that Nichols wants it both ways, and while that is well within his rights, I doubt that anyone will want to sit in the lap of a man whose movies have such cruel, misogynistic heroes as those of *Carnal Knowledge* or *The Fortune*—no matter how eager he is to amuse. That doesn't mean that Nichols can't be a first-rate filmmaker, but his desire to please and entertain seems more than ever to be aesthetically incompatible with that festering at the pit of his stomach. The tension in his films and the tension on the set of *The Fortune* may not be healthy ones—for him, for the people who work around him or for his art.

For all this, I liked Mike Nichols—or at least the Mike Nichols I was permitted to see—but I'm worried as well as fascinated by the way he presents himself to the world. In a conversation we had my last afternoon in California, he tied up the loose ends in my feelings about him—or at least brought the contradictions clearly to



Mike Nichols, during the filming of *Catch-22*: "I'm so confused by other people's responses to my movies."

light. "I'm so confused by other people's responses to my movies," he said. "To me the people in *Virginia Woolf* have a pretty good marriage. They want more for the other one than for themselves. It reminds me of the end of *The Fortune:* the men treat Freddie badly, but, despite that, they're friends—they're bound together, the three of them . . . .

"I'm not sure my movies need to be linked together," he continued. "But in my mind they're almost the same picture over and over. They're all about friendship and making the best of a rough situation and not coming to any final decision about other people or one's self. . . ." In truth, though, I think Nichols has come to that final decision about people. He may prefer to believe that his movies are about friendship—that even *The Day of the Dolphin* is, as he puts it, about "the dream of finding a new friend"—but spiritually Nichols is not Fellini and never will be. His view of humanity is not an optimistic one—he is better off collaborating with an Edward Albee than with a Buck Henry or a dolphin—and he owes it to himself to face up to the fact, to stop distancing himself and his audiences from what he really has to say by putting on a clever face. Mike Nichols does have a vision; his job now is to let it flower—even if that means that there will be cracks in his own surface and that of his work, even if it means that he will be less professional, even if it means that everything will be less "wonderful" and that he will lose a few friends.

While Mel Brooks and Monty Python broaden their comic attack to appeal to what they apparently regard as a hopelessly juvenile and indiscriminate public, Woody Allen has gone and made his most neurotic, parochial and, God knows, his most Jewish film to date. **Love and Death** certainly has its share of silliness, not to mention its dead spots, but I have nothing but admiration for a filmmaker who would follow a hugely accessible popular success like *Sleeper* with a movie whose comic idiom belongs to (of all things) 19th-century Russian literature. *Love and Death* is Allen's attempt to narrow the distance that separates his brilliant prose parodies (largely written for *The New Yorker* and collected in two swell books, *Getting Even* and *Without Feathers*) from his less idiosyncratic film work—and it's an admirable and audacious step in the right creative direction.

Rest assured, however, that you don't have to have an intimate knowledge of Tolstoy, Dostoevsky or Chekhov to get most of the punch lines in *Love and Death*; if you've sat through a high school production of *The Sea Gull* or read a trot on *The Brothers Karamazov*, you'll probably fare well enough. Allen is less concerned with making specific references to that literature than he is with reducing its diction to its ludicrous essentials. The characters of *Love and Death* are always "racked by guilt" or "possessed by thoughts of suicide" or "stricken with remorse" or longing "to die before the harvest"; their dreams are likely to be "strange and vivid" and their lives are usually "unbearable." The film's story (for lack of a better word) has something to do with the Napoleonic wars—in which the Allen hero, Boris, is a most unwilling participant. Boris is, as one of the film's society gossips would have it, "the coward that all of St. Petersburg is talking about"; in other words, he's your basic Allen persona—horny as hell, obsessed by mortality and food, and here dressed up in fur outfits that look like they were tailored for

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Omar Sharif (if not Julie Christie).

The woman in Boris' life is his cousin Sonja, played by (need I say it?) Diane Keaton. "I guess you could say I'm half-saint, half-whore" is the way the heroine matter-of-factly describes herself, and, in the tried-and-true tradition of the Allen-Keaton on-screen relationship, she loves Boris even though she is not, of course, "in love" with him. Sonja is also a querulous woman, prone to extending any conversation into the depths of philosophical debate. When Boris tells her that their plot to assassinate Napoleon is "morally wrong," Sonja instinctively replies with the question, "Can you define your terms?"; Boris then proceeds to do so, employing a syllogistic double-talk that may forever destroy etymology as a legitimate academic pursuit. When our hero is not engaging in such Groucho-like verbal ping-pong with Sonja or being shot out of a cannon on the war front or launching into premature curtain speeches about how "all there is in life is wheat," he is apt to be in the woods, confronting death. Death, it turns out, is a tall guy who dresses in white sheets and enjoys double-crossing those who question the existence of God.

Like Woody Allen's other movies, about a third of *Love and Death* is flab, and the gags that don't work are generally those that hurtle us back into the 20th century. When Allen throws in a Polish joke or a bunch of incongruous all-American cheerleaders or yet another one of his patented cracks about insurance salesmen, he seems to be making a conscious effort to placate an audience that might prefer to be watching *Sleeper*. Allen is far more disciplined than Mel Brooks—he doesn't feel compelled to have someone say the word "shit" every time there's a lag in the action—but he's still not disciplined enough; he tolerates lapses in *Love and Death* that he would never permit in his *New Yorker* pieces. Though he is becoming a better director with each film—the reworkings of cinematic quotes from Eisenstein and Bergman in this picture are a howl—Allen continues to fall into conventionally slick visual cliches when he's shooting indoors. (In two such interior sequences he does give us Altman-type bits in the background of his shots—a man who talks to a herring and a brawl between Napoleon and his double—and one wishes he had sustained that level of invention throughout.) I also don't understand why Allen continues to populate his movies with such drippy supporting casts; except for Alfred Lutter III (Ellen Burstyn's son in *Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore*) as the young Boris and Keaton (whose real charm comes from her WASP-y readings of Jewish-inflected lines), the subsidiary actors look as if they were bused in from one of those B French-Italian co-productions. (That may be the point, but I doubt it.) All of which is to say that Woody Allen can and will make better movies than this one—even though, right now, *Love and Death* is the funniest and smartest comedy around.

Music

The World's Most Elegant Rock and Roll Band

By Janet Maslin

In the old days it was still possible, when Mick Jagger sang about his 99th floor apartment in "Get Off Of My Cloud," to imagine some monumental tenement, some sky-high opium den, some squalid but lofty slum. But no more: though Jagger still performs that same hoarse chestnut on the Rolling Stones' current American tour, the jig is up. Now he wears dark-striped white kung-fu pajamas that are slashed at the waist and ankles, trimmed in pink; his eyes are carefully painted. His repertoire of movements has been broadened to include the obligatory kicks and punches. Those white loafers would be the ideal thing for padding around an immaculate, pale-carpeted penthouse—in fact, the whole outfit seems just as suitable for at-home lounging in the stratosphere as it does for prancing around a variety of basketball stadia. Never mind all the effort and publicity that have gone into touting the Stones as The World's Greatest Rock and Roll Band for all these years; the title they seem to be most actively pursuing lately is that of World's Most Elegant. On the evidence of the current show, they win that honor in a sashay.

The details of the tour have largely been attended to by Jagger and Charlie Watts, whose hair is cropped so short it resembles a monk's. Together, they have devised a stage so exquisite that, perhaps for the first time in rock-concert history, it pays to be in the balcony. Shaped like a six-petaled flower, curving slightly upward at the rear (so that Watts' drums require a small extended platform to keep them level), it seems much larger than an ordinary stage and reputedly weighs ten tons. The band stays within a central circle, which is bordered by some lovely, mirrored black substance (the rest of the stage is a mottled, highly polished tan), while Jagger sometimes uses a cordless

PHOTOGRAPH BY KEN KOBRE

Jagger and the outsized phallic balloon: a gift for one-upmanship.

mike to scamper around the perimeter, playing to everyone in the audience just as he promised, in various pre-tour interviews, to do.

One reason why the stage looks so nice, aside from the design, is that it's virtually free of equipment. While the instruments are down there (a white piano for temporary sideman Billy Preston is most noticeable), along with the band members and several improbably pretty amps, the speakers and other heavy artillery hang from the ceiling, heard but not seen. (Suspending the speakers enhances the theater-in-the-round effect, too, since the sound now seems to emanate from the very center of the hall.) Lining the petals' outer edges are a layer of that same obsidian material and four small wind machines, positioned to tousle Jagger's hair and outfit into the just-so degree of careful voluptuousness.

The lighting prefigures the time when Halston will rent out his services for this sort of thing. The lights appear in wonderfully striking high-fashion combinations—amber/mauve, pink/red/orange, purple/turquoise/puce—and change every five minutes or so, subtly enough to go almost unnoticed yet sufficiently frequent to keep things moving. There is a bank of yellow spotlights too, bunched together like daffodils right underneath the drums, but they are reserved for the show's moments of purest spectacle. During one of these, a concealed manhole at the flower's center slides open and out springs a huge phallic balloon, with which Jagger playfully assaults Ron Wood; during another, a dragon's head leaps out of the same hole and regurgitates confetti. This latest bit didn't work very well on at least one occasion (the show described here is the $9.50 cut-rate Boston version, by the way; later shows in New York and Los Angeles were scheduled to include an extra $3.00 worth of hijinks per ticket-holder). That time, the dragon knocked Jagger on his ear, while an unexpected interloper dashed across the stage—which proved, for all its beauty and cleverness, to be very easy to jump.

The music may still be the ostensible hard-news aspect of a Stones performance, but the band has been working overtime to make sure its music won't be the first thing you'll notice. The material here, mostly chosen from the last three albums—"All Down the Line," "If You Can't Rock Me," "Star, Star," "Luxury," "Tumbling Dice," "It's Only Rock and Roll," et al.—stands up surprisingly well, especially in view of the disappointment with which it was initially greeted. But these songs, however adept, can't possibly stir a crowd the way the material of the group's last really rabble-rousing tour did in 1969. "It's Only Rock and Roll," which builds to a chorus that might be expected to serve a Stones crowd as a joyous, arrogant anthem, was just one more number in a very long show—the song that elicited the most heartfelt audience response was the bleak "You Can't Always Get What You Want." And the hit of the evening, the loveliest moment in the set, came with the heartbreaking, anything-but-rock-and-roll "Angie."

They did play well, on the whole: though Keith Richard's guitar parts were only mild echoes of what he's done on record (and didn't seem to be aspiring to anything more), Jagger's superb, strong vocals more than compensated. Ron Wood, who is still allegedly a Face but seems likely to join the Stones officially soon, plays too much like Richard to complement him, and Bill Wyman remains a hard man to notice. But there are few more reassuring sights in this world than that of Charlie Watts, pounding steadily and impassively away with nary a glance at either his surroundings or the antics of his cohorts. So it's fitting that Watts should be intimately involved in planning this, the first Stones tour to fully emphasize their competence, sophistication and reserve, rather than their flash or even their music. The Stones still do impress, perhaps even more than ever. But they hardly challenge their audience anymore; they certainly don't excite the way they once could.

This is, to be sure, a minority opinion. A local radio station conducted an informal poll the day after the concert and—wouldn't you know it?—everybody they asked professed to think that the show had been simply socko. (Everyone also said that their ears were still ringing; this sound system is exceptionally faithful, but also deafeningly loud.) All I know is that the kid next to me dozed through half of the band's two-hour set, and that the balcony never reverberated with the kind of orgiastic enthusiasm, so easily generated by the Stones of years ago, that might have woken him up. As for the rest of the audience, most everyone sat quite still until, 15 minutes before the closing number (rock's true aristocrats do *not* do encores), the time-honored Emperor's New Clothes trick was employed. The house lights came on and,

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by gum, nobody was going to be caught looking anything short of ecstatic. So 15,000 people moved like one, leaping to their fect and flailing about, showering the band with carefully milked but still deserved applause. The Stones' eternal stylishness, their gift for one-upmanship, their singular daring and flair are still enough to keep them on top, even when all else pales.

***Gorilla, *James Taylor* (Warner Bros.). Singing of love, temper and temptation, Taylor has suddenly and unexpectedly catapulted out of the doldrums. A vigorous and surprisingly satisfying effort, on a par with much of his early work.

**½ Captain Fantastic and the Brown Dirt Cowboy, *Elton John* (MCA). Elton and Bernie's musical autobiography deliberately eschews hit-making; the results are sincere but subdued, at times almost ineffectual. A few lovely low-key moments, though, the best of which is "Someone Saved My Life Tonight," the story of EJ's breach-of-promise suit ("Almost had your hooks in me, dintcha dear?").

***Marvelettes Anthology (Motown). Long-awaited, and of course it includes "Please Mr. Postman." But don't overlook "Playboy," or "Beechwood 45789," or "Don't Mess with Bill," or "Too Many Fish in the Sea," or "My Baby Must Be a Magician," or. . . . No wonder it's a double album.

Books

Enemies of the people

By Geoffrey Wolff

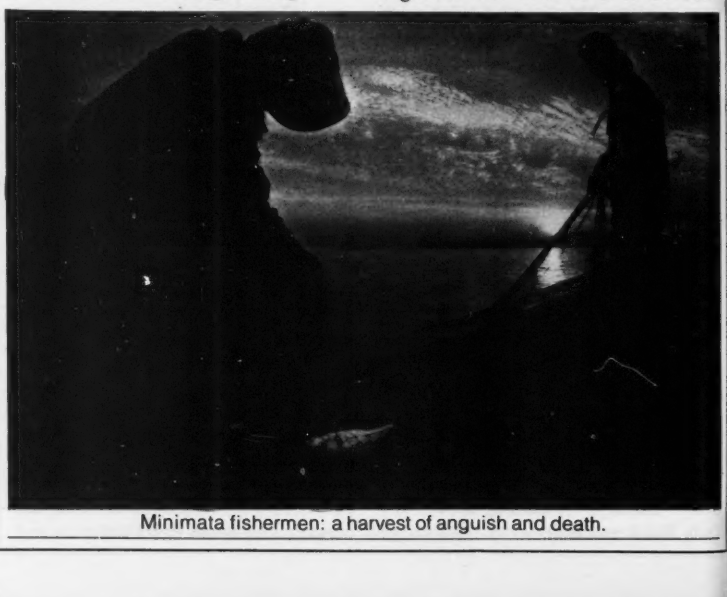
Minimata: Words and Photographs *by W. Eugene Smith and Aileen M. Smith.* An Alskog-Sensorium Book. Holt, Rinehart and Winston (192 pp., $20 cloth. $10 paper).

To reach Minimata from Tokyo, a traveler takes the train south and west through Hiroshima and Nagasaki to a sheltered inlet, Minimata Bay. The town has been a busy fishing port, naturally enough, and has been supported as well by a large and successful petrochemical company, Chisso, which was established in Minimata in 1907. The fishermen and factory managers lived, as a fisherman put it, as brothers; like brothers, from time to time they quarreled, as when Chisso indemnified the fishermen in 1925 for damage done to fish by the spill of factory waste into Minimata Bay.

By the early '50s Chisso was booming, and the population of the town had risen to 50,000. And in 1950 a plague began to settle on Minimata. Fish began to float to the surface, even before they died, as though they had lost the sense of their proper element. Octopus and cuttlefish came into shore so weakened that children could catch them with their hands. Then cats in the town began to catch what Minimatans called "dancing disease": They staggered as though drunk, whirled convulsively in ever tighter circles, often fell into the sea and drowned. By 1958 all the cats in Minimata had died.

But the people of the town had matters of graver character to worry about than their cats. In early 1956 a 5-year-old girl entered the pediatric department of Chisso's clinic with serious symptoms of brain damage, and within five weeks her sister and four neighbors entered with similar symptoms. These were: "numbness (of feet, hands and around the mouth), a kind of tingling numbness, a smarting, languidity, heaviness, dullness, pain (of head, shoulders, hands, feet, the small of the back), heaviness of the head, especially the back part, a blurry dimness of the eyes, difficulty in seeing surroundings (due to vision constriction), difficulty in hearing, ringing in the ears, difficulty in tasting, difficulty in smelling, easily stumbling, falling, difficulty in putting slippers on, the fingers not moving well, easily dropping things, difficulty in buttoning one's clothes, words becoming entangled and knotted, difficulty in mouthing words, lack of strength, cramps, muscle twitch, tremor, sleeplessness, tiring easily, not wanting to do anything, forgetfulness, lack of ability to concentrate, swooning, fainting."

The medical report appended to W. Eugene and Aileen Smith's photo essay might have added at this point that another symptom is death. It does add that "there is no way of healing the symptoms." At first the victims were diagnosed variously as having syphilis, infantile paralysis, cerebral palsy, encephalitis and as suffering from alcoholism. But in 1956 a doctor for Chisso, experimenting with animals, fed fish nourished by waste water from the factory to a cat who immediately suffered Minimata Disease, heavy-metal poisoning, methyl-mercury poisoning. The cats and people of the town had been poisoned by the fish of Minimata Bay. Chisso sat on the doctor's discovery, but six months later, after Minimata Disease had reached epidemic proportions, and after awful psychic damage had been inflicted on people suffering the disease by their neighbors who believed it to be con-



Minimata fishermen: a harvest of anguish and death.

tagious, a research group from Kumamoto University issued a warning that eating the fish and shellfish of Minimata Bay was dangerous. Seven hundred and ninety-eight people have contracted Minimata Disease, and 2,800 others are waiting to be verified in their own belief that they suffer from it. One hundred and seven have died. They're the lucky ones.

It is likely that you have already seen the photographs of the mutilated people who make up the subject of this book. Heavy-metal poisoning is not the disease of choice for a movie with a death-bed scene, not the disease a director would select for the final hours of Greta Garbo, or even Ali McGraw. The limbs are grotesquely twisted, the victim drools, the face is misshapen, the mouth twisted. Such massive brain damage attends the disease that congenital sufferers are often frozen forever at the mental state of infancy. Survivors must forever be bathed and dressed and fed. Someone is sentenced to forever try to lift their misery. The most famous, perhaps, of W. Eugene Smith's photographs from this essay shows a mother and ruined child, the child in her arms to be bathed, its lineaments unspeakably profaned by the disease. The scene though, with the odd transforming miracle of a great photograph, is "beautiful." Indeed, it is more beautiful than it is shocking. Smith and his half-Japanese wife understand the paradox of photography as well as anyone, and that is why their book is given over more to documentary pictures, exposing the workaday situations of its subjects, than to translations of their suffering into works of art.

The Smiths had lived in Minimata three years at the time this book was finished. During that time Eugene Smith was so badly beaten by Chisso employees during a protest in front of the factory at Goi that he was nearly blinded, suffered some broken vertebrae, was kicked full in the groin, was picked up by six men "who lifted me and slammed my head against the concrete outside, the way you would kill a rattlesnake if you had him by the tail." The result of his severe injuries was to publicize the condition of the victims of Minimata Disease—"just about the only thing Minimata is famous for"—and the stupidity and brutality of Chisso's managers.

The president of Chisso had admitted moral guilt but not legal responsibility for the disease caused only by his factory's waste. In 1959 he had made token settlements on some victims. On March 20, 1973, what Minimatans call "cash day," a Japanese court concluded that Chisso must pay a maximum of $68,000 and a minimum of $60,000 to every person who had contracted the disease, plus a monthly allowance of about $150. The judgment covered only the victims who had been shortchanged by the 1959 settlement. In a confrontation with Chisso's president, subsequent victims demanded a like settlement. When Chisso's president said the company could not pay it, a victim made an impassioned suicide attempt with a broken ashtray. "The president, nearly in shock, could be heard above the bedlam, saying, 'Yes, yes, yes—we will pay.'" By early 1975 Chisso had paid more than $80 million to its victims.

"Money," as the Smiths write, "has invaded the village of Minimata." Now people who were ashamed to admit to the disease rush to claim it, and to have their suffering verified so that they too can buy a new house, a car, a video-tape system or invest in stocks and bonds. Parents must live not only with the wreckage of their children, but with the knowledge that they are living off their children's misery. (If a woman had eaten a great deal of poisoned fish, she would die. A bit less, and she would have been sterile. A bit less and the child would have been stillborn. Less, such an amount that she herself would not have suffered any of the disease's symptoms, and she might have given birth to a monster, a child she would be obliged for the rest of her life to regard as the fruit of her enthusiasm for fish.)

In 1966 the disease broke out in Niigata, where the victims were compensated by another chemical company, Showa Denko, after the intervention of the courts. Now, at this writing, extremely high concentrations of mercury have been found in Ontario's English-Wabigoon River, the result of spill from the Dryden Paper Company. Canada's Ministry of Health, eager to protect the tourist camps along the river that make their living from sport-fishermen, have tried to make little of much. No people have died, yet. None has been stricken, yet. Cats, though, fed fish from the English-Wabigoon, fall ill after six or eight weeks. And in 1973 the officials of Minimata declared that all fish taken outside buoys marking the worst pollution of Minimata Bay are safe. Ignoring, as the Smiths point out, that fish can swim from water inside buoys to water outside buoys.

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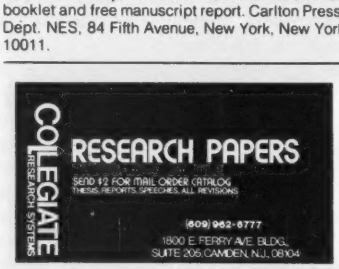
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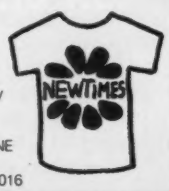


Not just playing possum

Final Tribute

By Lewis Archibald

It is not common these days to remember quiet things. Not common at all. Which is probably why the doings of a small possum and his friends in a Southern swamp have ceased to be of much interest to the world. And will shortly, in fact, cease to be altogether.

Once the preeminent newspaper cartoon of its day—in a day when newspapers were much more numerous than they are now—"Pogo" was the forerunner of just about all that is good on the new funny pages still going, the first strip to prove that style and satire, not to mention beauty of line, could exist side by side with eyeless orphans and two-fisted Air Force pilots.

In Walt Kelly's creation can be seen the structural genes of such present-day caricaturists as David Levine and such political cartoonists as Patrick Oliphant; in the tracks of Kelly's quizzical type of humor have followed "Peanuts," "B.C." and "Doonesbury."

But Kelly himself died of diabetes in 1973 and the strip has been maintained by his widow and family. Blaming lack of newspaper space and poor transferral techniques that blur and obscure the painstaking "Pogo" drawings, Kelly's heirs have announced that Pogo will retire permanently to his Okefenokee fishing hole sometime in late July. To be joined no doubt by Krazy Kat, Barnaby, Archy and Mehitabel in a perloo of epic dimensions.

Of all of them, "Pogo" was the one with the clearest roots to the American folk tale, the one that drew most on our sense of what inhabits a tall story. Even the character names were a toothsome array of old-time melodrama rejects and legendary overstatements: Sarcophagus Macabre, the buzzard undertaker whose speaking balloons were always ringed in black; P.T. Bridgeport, political promoter extraordinaire and the best-dressed bear in the funny papers; Churchy La Femme, the turtle, and Mallard de Mer, the postman duck; Dr. Howland Owl, who coined that immortal phrase "nuclear physics ain't all that new and it ain't all that clear."

And of course Simple J. Malarkey, the 1953 polecat who bore an unmistakable resemblance to a certain Wisconsin senator. His confrontation with Miss Sis Boombah, a four-square all-American chicken who also turned out to be a Rhode Island Red, was an early sign that politics were about to receive as big a mauling on the comic page as they sometimes—and sometimes not—got in the editorials.

Thus, over the years many world figures turned up in the Okefenokee in animal guise; it nearly always became them. Spiro Agnew was a hyena with poor posture but a fancy doorman's outfit. LBJ was a mangy longhorn. George Wallace was simply Chicken Little. There was a goat that looked like Castro, a portly pig that looked like

Khrushchev and a bulldog that actually flattered J. Edgar Hoover (it made him look a bit like Sargent Shriver).

Just before his death Kelly introduced his most bizarre creation—a spider-legged teapot with the spout of an elephant and a familiar set of close-set eyes. It was, it reiterated, desirous of making one thing perfectly clear.

In the midst of all this folderol, Pogo the possum stayed his quiet, amiable, almost unnoticeable self—the first harbinger perhaps of that faceless and nearly spineless corporate man who now fills our comedy. Charlie Brown minus the angst. Bob Newhart minus the collar. An undomesticated version of Joseph Heller's and John Cheever's latest "heros." The only difference being that when Kelly looked at Pogo, he overwhelmingly liked what he saw.

It was, he often admitted, the one problem that could blunt his satiric edge. Kelly could not withhold his affection from any creation of his once they stayed around for a while. They acquired soul, he found: "This always happens," he once said. "I can't fly kites either." Even Spiro the hyena was allowed to feel loneliness after imprisoning the entire swamp population "on suspicion of bein' suspect."

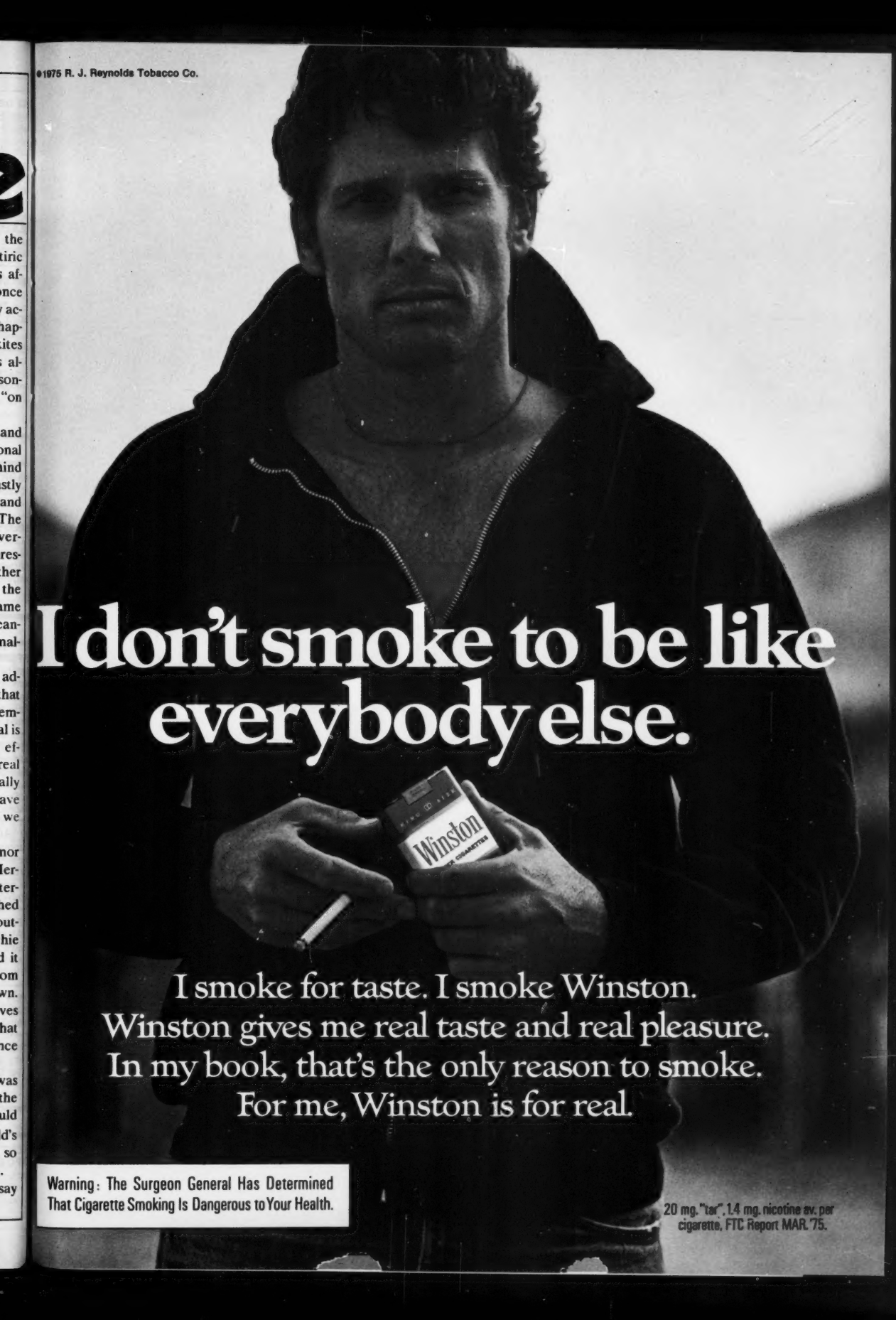
To some this indicated more and more that Kelly's sense of the national pulse was a bit wavering, a bit behind (though surely any man who steadfastly maintains "We have met the enemy and he is us" will always be on time). The college crowd who had so overwhelmingly supported Pogo for president in 1952 gradually turned to other things such as Hermann Hesse and the macrobiotic lunch. Newspapers became less tolerant and more Waspish, canceling the strip in offense at the animalized Agnew, Wallace and Johnson.

There really aren't any adjectives you can apply to "Pogo" that haven't become fairly suspect themselves. To say it was quietly whimsical is to cast it down somewhere with the efforts of H. Allen Smith; to say it had real warmth and affection is to practically tuck it in with Mary Worth. We have become more demanding now, or so we think. But all we really are is harder.

So, now we want our humor etched with the heartless acid of a Herblock, or the equally heartless boisterousness of a Mel Brooks. Polished cynicism. Roughhouse (sometimes outhouse) farce. The bark of Archie Bunker is alive across the land, and it drowns out all previous voices from Will Rogers and Mark Twain on down. What place then for those adjectives above in the '75 scheme of things? What chance is there that worth will once again be measured?

For "Pogo" it appears there was not enough. He could probably see the plans on the drawing board that would convert the Okefenokee into the world's largest K-Mart in three years. And so he's getting out before he's driven out.

Which is more than you can say of some of his opponents. ●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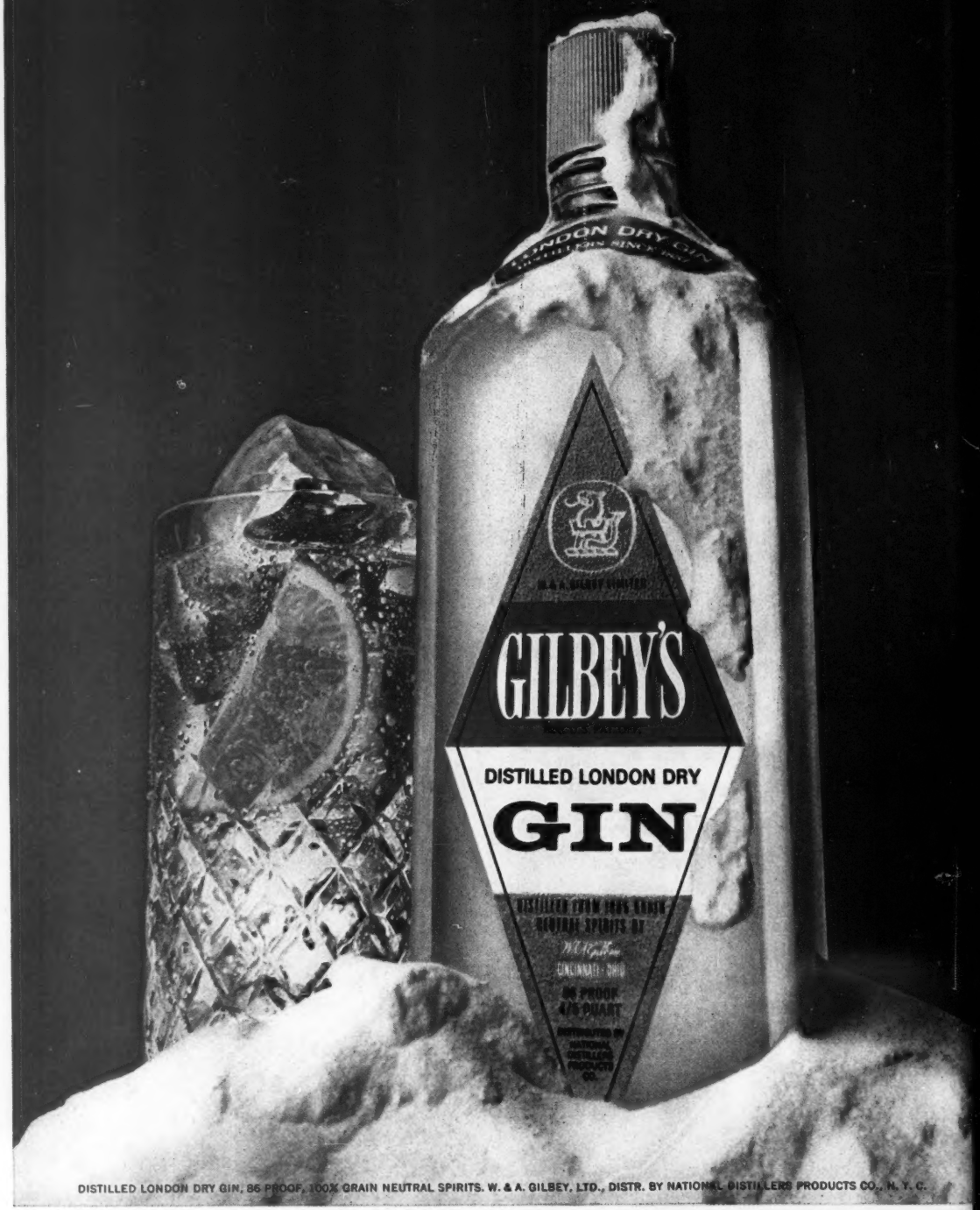

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